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# CHINA DAILY

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## Serial blasts



A screenshot from a social media video captures moment a man's bag explodes on Tuesday inside a supermarket in Beirut, Lebanon. Hundreds of handheld pagers exploded almost simultaneously across Lebanon and parts of Syria, injuring more than 2,800 people and killing at least 12. On Wednesday, 20 people were killed and 450 injured when hand-held radios exploded in Lebanon. VIA REUTERS See story, page 8

## Reactions vary to Fed's substantial rate cut

By HENG WEILI in New York hengweili@chinadailyusa.com

The US Federal Reserve's hefty rate cut on Wednesday, about seven weeks before the presidential election, drew different reactions from the two main candidates and from financial experts.

The rate cut — the first since March 2020 at the outset of the pandemic — was 50 basis points (0.5 percentage point) as opposed to 25 basis points, as many analysts had anticipated.

Vice-President Kamala Harris, the Democratic candidate, called the rate cut "welcome news" for Americans.

"I know prices are still too high for many middle-class and working families," she said in a statement.

Republican nominee Donald Trump, who as president first appointed the current Fed chair, Jerome Powell, said the size of the cut suggested the economy may be in trouble.

"To cut it by that much, assuming they're not just playing politics, the economy would be very bad," Trump told reporters.

Powell said the US economy remained strong, but he acknowledged the issues raised by economists and analysts about inflation, and said it takes time for changes in monetary policy to have an impact.

"There is thinking that the time to support the labor market is when it

is strong, and not when you begin to see layoffs," Powell said.

The Fed had maintained its policy rate in the 5.25 percent-5.50 percent range since July 2023. That was when it concluded an 18-month rate-hiking campaign against surging inflation, which soared in June 2022 to 9.1 percent, a 40-year high.

Powell declined to declare victory on the inflation front, but he said it is now near the Fed's 2 percent goal, and labor conditions are consistent with the central bank's other goal — maximum employment.

"The Fed ended the pause with a bang. It's a strong signal that they cut by 50 basis points and expect another 50 basis points of cuts this year. This was controversial," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management.

"The 50 basis point cut suggests the Fed is worried about the labor market," said Dean Maki, chief economist at the hedge fund Point72 Asset Management, The Wall Street Journal reported. "It is an unusually large move in the context of the economic data we've been receiving."

"The Fed was criticized for being too slow to start raising rates. Naturally, it doesn't want to be criticized again for being too late. It really is focused on achieving the soft landing," said Loretta Mester, who retired in June as president of the Cleveland Fed, reported the Journal.

Eleven of the 12 members of the Federal Open Market Committee,

the Fed's rate-setting panel, supported the cut, which brought the benchmark federal funds rate to between 4.75 percent and 5 percent.

Dissenting was Michelle Bowman, who became the first Fed governor to vote against an interest rate decision since 2005. Bowman favored a 25 basis-point cut. Over the past year, she also has emerged as one of the Fed's most hawkish voices on monetary policy, supporting a higher policy rate for longer than most of the other central bankers.

On the consumer front, the lower rates will eventually mean better rates for borrowers, many of whom are facing some of the highest credit card-interest rates in decades.

The average interest rate for new credit offers is 23.18 percent, and 21.51 percent for existing accounts, according to WalletHub's August Credit Card Landscape Report.

As for mortgage rates, the majority of Americans have mortgages around 5 percent, so rates may have to fall further than their current average of 6.46 percent before many consider refinancing, according to Jacob Channel, a senior economist at Lending Tree, an online marketplace for loans.

For those who like to save their money, Matt Brannon, a personal finance expert at MarketWatch guides said: "Lower interest rates make it harder to maximize savings and preserve the capital built while interest rates have been higher. An

easy short-term move to protect your savings is to shift your funds into a high-yield savings account, which offers higher interest rates than traditional savings accounts," he said.

"These types of savings accounts will still help you to preserve capital due to comparatively higher interest rates."

The rate cut also drew some skepticism on social media.

"As expected, the Fed caved to the markets and cut interest rates by 50 basis points. Not only will this round of rate cuts not stop a cooling economy from entering a recession, but it will also turn up the heat on inflation, making the recession that much worse," wrote economist Peter Schiff, an advocate for gold investing, to his 1 million followers on X.

In Asian markets, stocks rose on the Fed rate-cut news.

"Lower US interest rates could boost risk appetite for Asian stocks, driving capital inflows into emerging markets as investors seek higher returns," said Manish Bhargava, chief executive officer at Straits Investment Management, reported bloomberg.com.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority on Thursday also cut its base interest rate by 50 basis points to 5.25 percent, and also the first time since 2020.

Agencies contributed to this story.

## China eyes ties with Africa in green transition

Partnership actions proposed by Xi meet pressing, emerging needs of Global South

By HOU LIQIANG houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

A green development partnership proposed by President Xi Jinping has struck a chord with African nations, as it aligns with their urgent need to promote green transformation, presenting an opportunity for them to leapfrog in the global value chain, experts said.

The Partnership Action for Green Development is one of 10 partnership actions the president proposed for modernization to deepen China-Africa cooperation and spearhead the Global South modernization.

"China is ready to launch 30 clean energy projects in Africa, put in place meteorological early warning systems, and carry out cooperation in disaster prevention, mitigation and relief as well as biodiversity conservation," Xi said when addressing the opening ceremony of the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation earlier this month in Beijing.

"We will create a China-Africa forum on peaceful use of nuclear technology, establish together 30 joint laboratories, and collaborate on satellite remote sensing and lunar and deep-space exploration. All this is designed to help with green development in Africa," he added.

Xu Qinyi, assistant professor at Peking University's School of International Studies and a researcher at the university's Institute of Carbon

Neutrality, said that President Xi's proposal for a green development partnership between China and Africa resonates effectively with the significant green transformation needs of African nations.

With fragile ecological environments, many African nations are among the most vulnerable to climate change, Xu said.

As the African continent witnesses rapid population growth and economic development, a trend defined by a pronounced shift toward rapid urbanization and industrialization, many African nations are witnessing a notable rise in energy consumption and electricity demand.

"All these factors underscore an urgent need for the continent to prioritize green transformation," she said.

China's proficiency in green development, exemplified by its well-designed climate policy, globally renowned capability in promoting green innovation, seamless interministerial cooperation and substantial progress in solar and wind energy development, stands poised to effectively address the pressing and emerging needs of Africa, she added.

Xu said the meteorological early warning systems President Xi proposed to build in cooperation with African nations respond to the United Nations initiative of Early Warnings for All.

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## Fest for motor enthusiasts



A man tries an electric pickup truck of Chinese automaker SAIC Maxus during the media preview of the International Motor Show Transportation 2024 on Monday in Hannover, Germany. REN PENGFEI / XINHUA

## Public, private sectors key to nation's modernization

The resolution adopted by the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China covers a broad range of issues. It is a detailed, comprehensive and strategic plan. The resolution can be described as a road map for China's long-term development.

The goal of transforming China into a great modern socialist country by 2049, marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, remains unchanged.

However, it is important to clarify a set of intermediate objectives and establish their sequence. Also, the Chinese leadership has added 2035 as a milestone for the overall modernization of the country.

WORLD WATCH By Alexander V. Lomanov

China's experience clearly demonstrates that the policy of simultaneously supporting the public and private sectors of the economy is not a short-term measure adopted during the transition from planning to implementation.

It is a long-term strategy aimed at maximizing the potential of enterprises of various ownership forms and engaging private entrepreneurship in achieving development goals in the interest of the entire nation.

There is no longer any basis for arguing that one of the two components — either the public economy or private enterprises — has limited prospects and will be phased out of the Chinese economy.

Private entrepreneurship stimulates economic activity and innovation, while the course of creating a modern industrial system remains inseparable from the development of large State-owned enterprises and government support for innovation.

From the perspective of the old Soviet model, private entrepreneurship is "superfluous". From the standpoint of the Western liberal model, public ownership is "redundant". Chinese modernization has surpassed these one-sided approaches by demonstrating its ability to attract private businesses to achieve national development goals.

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## YELLOW RIVER BASIN ON COURSE FOR GREENER FUTURE

Efforts stepped up to ensure ecological protection, high-quality development

By ZHAO RUIXUE in Jinan, ZHU XINGXIN in Taiyuan and MA JINGNA in Lanzhou



In mid-September, the Maqu wetlands in Gansu province are a picturesque scene of lush grasslands stretching toward the horizon like a green carpet, with rivers and waterways shimmering under the late summer sunshine.

A bridge spanning the Yellow River connects Qinghai province, where the river originates in the west, with

the Maqu wetlands in the east.

The Yellow River winds its way through Maqu county for 433 kilometers, with over 300 of its tributaries flowing through vast grasslands and wetlands. These waterways replenish the Yellow River with nearly 10 billion cubic meters of water annually, making it a crucial

water source conservation area in the upper reaches of the river.

Ma Jianyun, the chief engineer of the forestry technology comprehensive service station at the county's natural resources bureau, points at photos taken before and after to show the success of restoration efforts in recent years. "Look at how the barren riverbanks have turned lush and green. The effects of desertification control are evident," he said.

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## PAGE TWO

## Conservation: Safeguarding China's lifeline



Tourists visit the Hukou Waterfall on the Yellow River in Jixian county, Shanxi province, on Aug 8. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

## From page 1

President Xi Jinping stressed improvement in conservation efforts of the river basin and its high-quality development when he chaired a symposium in Lanzhou, Gansu's capital, on Sept 12.

Xi underlined the need to promote new progress in ecological protection across the basin, green transformation, high-quality development, and improvement in the people's livelihood.

Revered as China's "Mother River" and a cradle of civilization, the Yellow River flows through nine provinces and autonomous regions, and impacts the lives of 420 million people.

Despite facing challenges such as frequent flooding, efforts are already underway to strengthen the protection and development of this key waterway.

In October 2021, China released a comprehensive outline for the protection and development of the Yellow River Basin, aiming to guide policy formulation and engineering projects to address the basin's unique challenges.

The implementation of the national Yellow River Protection Law in April last year, along with provincial regulations tailored to local conditions, further enhances governance and protection of the river.

"The ecological protection and high-quality development strategy in the Yellow River Basin, as well as policies and regulations such as the Yellow River Protection Law, have provided us with a foundation for our work," said Chen Xiaowei, director of the Yellow River channel management station in Lanzhou.

Chen and his team not only patrol the river to monitor ecological challenges, but also disseminate policies and regulations to the public to enhance people's awareness about environmental protection.

"Today, the banks of the Yellow River in Lanzhou are shaded by lush trees, and filled with the fragrance of flowers, attracting a continuous flow of residents and tourists," said Chen.

## Wetlands preservation

In the 1990s, Maqu faced significant grassland desertification issues along the Yellow River due to permafrost degradation, frequent river course changes, and wind erosion. This led to water conservation and biodiversity being compromised. On windy days, for instance, sand would blanket the grasslands, posing problems for local herders.

In 2021, Gansu launched an integrated protection and restoration project for its mountains, waters, forests, lakes, grasslands and sand resources in the upper Yellow River Basin to restore degraded grasslands and wetlands, and to control erosion.

By the end of 2023, over 42,000 hectares of land along the Yellow River in Maqu had been restored.

Chopa Dondrub, 32, has long been aware of the ecological changes in Maqu, his hometown.

In 2019, after graduating from Southwest Minzu University with a master's degree in ethnology, he returned home and established the Maqu County Ecological Environment Protection Association.

One of his responsibilities involves collaborating with the local community to address the issue of black soil patches. The patches are a consequence of alpine vegetation degradation and create bare spots in the grasslands. If left unattended, they can expand, impacting soil conservation and posing an environmental threat.

"Black soil patches are soft, and one may find their shoes sinking in when walking on them," said Chopa Dondrub.



Left: Tourists visit the Hukou Waterfall on the Yellow River in Jixian county, Shanxi province, on Aug 8. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY  
Right: Villagers sow grass seeds on a grassland management point along the Yellow River in Maqu county, Gannan Tibetan autonomous prefecture, Gansu province, on July 6. FANG XIN / XINHUA



The process of restoring black soil patches is not complex but requires attention to detail and patience, he said.

Chopa Dondrub and his volunteers plant grass seeds in spring, which are a meter high by November, successfully covering the black soil patches.

Over the past five years, Chopa Dondrub and his team have restored tens of thousands of spots affected by black soil patches, with the areas varying in size from 1 square meter to 10 sq m.

## Fighting a 'green desert'

In Dongying, Shandong province, where the Yellow River flows into the sea, a different problem is being dealt with — controlling the spread of an invasive plant species.

"For many years, we have been in a battle with this 'green' in the delta," said Zhou Licheng, head of the planning and construction department in the Shandong Yellow River Delta National Nature Reserve in Dongying.

The "green" he is referring to is smooth cordgrass, or *Spartina alterniflora*, a plant native to the US Atlantic coast and a dominant species in coastal intertidal wetlands due to its tolerance to fluctuating water depths and salinity.

"A large part of the reserve appeared to be lush and green, but it was actually a deceptive 'green desert' where most of the native flora and benthic organisms had died. The soil smelled foul whenever roots were dug



Swans frolic on the Yellow River in Hualong, Qinghai province, on Nov 30. ZHANG LONG / XINHUA

out," said Zhou.

Now the "green desert" has disappeared thanks to years of effort to eradicate the cordgrass.

In the reserve is a stone monument inscribed with the words "Shengli Oilfield Kandong 12", marking a former oil extraction site and the primary battleground for controlling smooth cordgrass.

From a vantage point on a high platform, visitors can see the vast expanse of tidal flats stretching toward the distant horizon. Next to the stone monument, there is a row of display boards showcas-

ing photos of the area in the past — endless expanses of lush, green cordgrass.

Beside the display boards are withered specimens of smooth cordgrass, with roots resembling a bird's nest and stems stretching up to 2 meters in length.

"Its name sounds romantic and poetic, with an appearance resembling rice ears," said Zhou, adding the plant has strong salt tolerance.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the plant was introduced to Dongying to stabilize embankments and slow coastal erosion.

"At the beginning, we did not fully understand its harm and simply saw it as scenic. Later, its growth became too vigorous, making other salt-tolerant plants disappear. Birds had nowhere to find food, so they flew away," Zhou said.

"We dug up a smooth cordgrass and found that its roots could penetrate nearly one meter into the soil. The roots contained many clam and crab shells, and emitted a putrid smell," he added.

The area of smooth cordgrass in Dongying covered 8,733 hectares by 2010, posing a severe threat to the delta's wetland ecosystem.

The city began to explore ways to control the spread of the plant in 2016. In the reserve, workers set up an experimental field and tried six control methods, incorporating both physical and chemical technologies.

Eventually, they worked out a control strategy tailored to specific areas, and in 2020 began to clear the smooth cordgrass.

They removed all aboveground vegetation before their seeds matured and were dispersed. Workers then enclosed specified areas with a special film to trap and hold up to 60 centimeters of seawater, which killed the plant's root system by subjecting it to high salinity levels for 90 days.

Another method involved continuous plowing to crush the roots to about 10 centimeters so they could be cleared away.

Meanwhile, workers restored native species such as Suaeda salsa and seagrass beds, which helped conserve biodiversity and improve soil quality.

More than 99 percent of smooth cordgrass has been removed from the reserve, leading to the return of some fauna that had been absent for years.

## Birds return home

The increasing number of creatures and improved ecological environment have attracted flocks of birds to the reserve and some have settled there permanently, said Zhou.

The Yellow River estuary migratory bird sanctuary was listed as a World Natural Heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in July.

As the ecological environment improves, the Hukou Waterfall area on the Yellow River in Shanxi province has also transformed into a "bird paradise". Species such as black storks, herons, egrets, black-winged stilts, and geese have become the subjects of photographer Lyu Guiming.

The 52-year-old grew up along the banks of the Yellow River. He has been taking photos while working at the waterfall scenic area for over two decades.

"This is a photo I took of the Hukou Waterfall in 2005, with very turbid water; and this one was taken in 2015, where the water flow is noticeably clearer," said Lyu.

"The ecological environment here has substantially improved during the past years," he added.

The sand and mud carried by the Yellow River has significantly decreased thanks to a series of ecological protection and restoration projects such as wetland restoration and desertification control in the upper reaches of the river.

Located in the middle reaches of the Yellow River, Shanxi benefits from these protection and restoration projects. The province, once heavily dependent on the coal industry, is now committed to achieving results in ecological environment protection.

The forest coverage rate in Shanxi has increased from 18.03 percent in 2010 to 23.57 percent in 2020, with the rate in the Yellow River Basin reaching 25.25 percent, according to provincial government statistics.

In the Hukou Waterfall scenic area, Jixian county had invested more than 23 million yuan since 2020 to expand forest coverage, planting over 15,000 evergreen trees, more than 20,000 flowering shrubs, 17,000 lilacs, 50,000 ivy plants, and cultivating over 40,000 sq m of perennial flowers and grasses, according to the statistics released in 2023.

The province will implement the Regulations on Ecological Protection and High-Quality Development in the Yellow River Basin of Shanxi Province on Oct 1.

The regulations request the integration of key afforestation projects across the province to build a forest system, and a gradual increase in the forest coverage rate in the Yellow River Basin, said Sun Junrong, deputy director of the Legal Affairs Committee of the Standing Committee of the Shanxi Provincial People's Congress.

"With the collaborative efforts along the river, I believe the Yellow River will become more beautiful," said Lyu.



Cranes fly over the Yellow River Delta wetland in Dongying, Shandong province. ZHANG XIAOLONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

## TOP NEWS

## History recalled to cherish present

By ZHOU HUIYING and TIAN XUEFEI in Harbin

A 1939 map of Japan's agricultural emigration to northeastern China, which is a national first-class cultural relic, was displayed to the public for the first time on Wednesday, the 93rd anniversary of the September 18 Incident, at the Northeast China Revolutionary Martyrs' Memorial Hall in Harbin, Heilongjiang province.

The map serves as solid evidence of Japanese aggressors seizing farmland in northeastern China and harming the Chinese people during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45), according to the hall.

Wednesday marked the 93rd anniversary of the September 18 Incident in 1931, in which Japanese troops began the bloody invasion of China, foreshadowing World War II and making the country the first to resist fascism.

The immigration map, published in Japan in 1939, is printed in red, black and light blue and is 76 cm by 54 cm. It was acquired by the hall in 1996 and is well preserved.

"From the map, it is clear to see the organized and large-scale immigration policy implemented by Japanese aggressors after occupying northeastern China," said Li Anyang, a guide at the hall. "The locations and data marked on the map were part of their '1 million household immigration plan in 20 years', which is also evidence of Japan's aggressive large-scale immigration."

More than 80 students from colleges and primary schools in Harbin visited the hall on Wednesday to cherish the memory of the country's revolutionary martyrs.

"The September 18 Incident is not

just a period of humiliating history but also a poignant heroic epic," said Zhang Xin, a teacher from Tieling Primary School. "Our students in the new era must remember history and cherish the present."

"I hope the visit can bring them more strength, which can help them strive to learn scientific and cultural knowledge and contribute to constructing our country into a strong modern socialist nation," she added.

Also on Wednesday, the Museum of Evidence of War Crimes by the Japanese Army Unit 731 in Harbin and Seiya Matsuno, a Japanese historian, jointly released new evidence of atrocities during the war.

The 267-page document provides detailed information on 100 technicians of the germ warfare detachments of the Imperial Japanese Army from February 1944 to August 1945.

Technicians refer to specialized technical professionals who were appointed as high-ranking officials, technical officers or core researchers during the war, according to the museum.

They were included in the Japanese army's official hierarchy, often serving as heads of various research departments and primarily engaging in various bacteriological experiments and medical research.

"Among them, there were 57 from Unit 731, a top-secret biological and chemical warfare research base established in Harbin in 1935," said Jin Shicheng, a researcher at the museum. "The document records detailed information, including their dates of appointment, promotion history, alma maters and achievements."

"The information well presents the overall structure and composition of Unit 731," Jin added. "It is crucial evidence for deepening the study of Japan's bacteriological warfare units and holds significant importance for fully exposing Japan's bacteriological warfare crimes."

Furthermore, the information "is also an attempt at joint Sino-Japanese disclosure of the crimes", he said. "We hope more forces can unite to jointly expose Japan's atrocities in bacteriological warfare, helping people remember history and safeguard peace."

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Visitors walk past a column with the words "Peace" written on it as they pay respect to the victims of the Nanjing Massacre on Tuesday in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, a day before the 93rd anniversary of the September 18 Incident. LIU JIANHUA / FOR CHINA DAILY

## Head and shoulders above all



A 10-meter-tall humanoid robot called JINKI demonstrates its features on Wednesday at the ongoing Tokyo Robot Week, a trade show specializing in robots, in Tokyo, Japan. Commissioned two months ago for maintenance of operating lines by Japan Railway West, the robot is designed to tackle heavy work involving railway equipment. DAVID MAREUIL / ANADOLU VIA GETTY IMAGES

## Experts: Tariffs will hit US consumers hard

Lower-income group will bear brunt while buying merchandise

By BELINDA ROBINSON in New York

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Consumers in the United States could soon be paying more to buy imported goods, warned economists and retail trade organizations, after the Biden administration finalized tariff increases on certain products made in China.

"Lower-income US consumers will face the biggest consequences from the new tariff hikes," Thomas Fullerton, an economist and economics professor at University of Texas at El Paso, said.

"That is because they purchase more merchandise goods than services, and many of those goods are produced in China or contain components produced in China."

The Biden administration first proposed the higher tariffs in May on more than \$18 billion worth of products from China. The tariffs are scheduled to come into effect on September 27.

The tariffs will rise to 100 percent on electric vehicles, 50 percent on solar cells, and 25 percent on steel, lithium-ion batteries, aluminum and key minerals. Increased tariffs on semiconductor chips will take effect over the next two years, the Office of the US Trade Representative said.

The spike is likely to not only drive up costs for Chinese brands that ship to the US, but also for US companies and consumers who buy low-cost goods, said experts.

"A substantial portion, but not all, of the higher costs will be paid by US consumers," Fullerton said. "Chinese companies and US importers will also see reduced profit margins because not all the tariffs will be completely passed

on in the form of higher prices."

The National Foreign Trade Council, a trade association based in Washington, also expressed concern about the impact of the tariffs on cash-strapped US households and importers.

"There is no doubt that tariffs raise costs for consumers, and adding new and expanded tariffs will harm working families and imperil America's national and economic security," NFTC Vice-President of Global Trade Policy Tiffany Smith told China Daily.

"Tariffs are paid by US importers, not the Chinese government, and represent dollars that are no longer available for these companies to reinvest in innovation, employees, or expanding their businesses," she said. "Tariffs are blunt instruments that have not and will not resolve the complex economic challenges that exist between the US and China."

An analysis by the Tax Foundation found that the new tariffs would create an additional tax burden of \$3.6 billion on US businesses and consumers.

In 2018, former president Donald Trump imposed the original tariffs that eventually covered more than \$300 billion in imports from China, which later responded with its own tariffs.

Biden not only retained Trump's tariffs, but also increased the rates.

Vice-President Kamala Harris, the Democratic presidential candidate, hasn't detailed her tariff policy yet.

Trump, however, has been clear. He recently branded himself a "tariff president" and the US a "tariff nation". Harris criticized his policy as a "sales tax" on households and a "Trump tax".

Trump said that it's "not going to be a cost to you. It's going to be a cost to another country".

Numerous economists and retail organizations disagree.

They said if Trump enacts proposed tariffs of 10 to 20 percent on all goods and 60 percent on goods from China, it will ultimately hurt US consumers.

In the study, "Why Trump's tariff proposals would harm working Americans", by the Washington-based Peterson Institute for International Economics, Kimberly Clausing and Mary Lovely argued that the tariffs could end up hurting Americans families, farmers and exporters the most.

The study said that "in contrast to Trump's frequent, and mistaken, claims that foreigners bear the impact of tariffs, economists have long understood that tariffs burden domestic purchasers of imported goods because imports are the difference between domestic demand and domestic supply and tariff affects both sides of the market."

Lovely, professor emeritus of economics at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and a senior fellow of the Peterson Institute, said: "The new taxes are economically significant. A household with median income is projected to pay \$1,700 more each year in import taxes. The taxes are also regressive in the sense they take a larger share of income from poorer households than richer households."

The Center for American Action Forum, a liberal think tank, estimated that tariffs proposed by Trump could amount to a \$3,900 annual tax increase for a middle-income family.

## Energy: China helps build Africa's capacity

From page 1

Launched in 2022 by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, the initiative aims to ensure that everyone on earth is protected from hazardous weather, water or climate events through lifesaving early warning systems by the end of 2027.

The early warning system plays a pivotal role in climate adaptation by significantly reducing climate risks, mitigating direct losses caused by extreme disasters and minimizing their impact on human health, she said.

Strengthening the capacity of African nations in this regard not only ensures sustainability but also underpins the longevity of China-Africa cooperation, she added.

Christian Geraud Neema Byamungu, a China-Africa expert and Africa Editor at China Global South Project, said that global green transition offers a significant development opportunity for Africa, with China positioned to play a crucial role in assisting nations on the continent to maximize its potential.

## Further contribution

In the process of the green transition, akin to an industrial revolution, some African nations with rich reserves of minerals critical for the transition, such as lithium, nickel, manganese and cobalt, are at the cusp of seizing this opportunity to establish themselves as key players in the green transition, Neema Byamungu said on Sept 6 in a symposium held by the Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress, a non-profit think tank.

However, he underscored the formidable challenge posed by the necessity to process these minerals rather than solely exporting raw materials.

The complexity of processing these crucial minerals necessitates inputs that are often scarce within producing countries. It's also a pressing issue for these countries to address the hurdles related to infrastructure, he said, citing inadequate electricity supply as an example.

China's response to countries such as Mali and Zimbabwe by constructing lithium concentrators signifies a step in the right direction. "But it needs to go further than that," he added.

He noted the significant potential of China in creating the nexus between renewable energy development and mining transition minerals in Africa to help address the challenges that are preventing many African nations from moving up the value chain.

Aside from boasting transition minerals, many of those African countries have resources for solar, wind and hydropower, making it possible for such nexus to be created, he said.

Fu Yike, climate program manager from Development Reimagined, an African-led international development consultancy, said that based on data from the World Bank, Africa has the highest solar energy potential among all continents.

The average long-term practical potential solar energy output in Africa stands at 4.51 kilowatt-hours per kilowatt-peak per day, compared with 4.33 kWh/kWp/day in Asia, according to Fu.

kWh/kWp is a common unit used in the field of solar energy to measure the efficiency of a solar photovoltaic system.

Fu said, however, while exporting transition minerals, many African nations, without necessary expertise and experience, heavily depend on imports to get solar photovoltaic panels. They also confront challenges in integrating solar power generation into their current grids.

She also noted inadequate infrastructure and insufficient investment as the other factors that hinder the localization of solar photovoltaic manufacturing in Africa.

"Chinese companies have the potential to make substantial contributions across these domains," she said.

She added that by establishing solar PV manufacturing facilities in Africa, they can not only enhance local industrial chain but also bolster capacity building.

## Reforms: Nation adapts development strategy amid external changes

From page 1

The advantage of the Chinese system lies in the presence of two hands. The Soviet system had only one "visible hand of the state", with the exception of the period of the New Economic Policy in the 1920s. The modern Western system, in line with liberal theory, relies on the omnipotence of the "invisible hand of the market". China's successes can be explained by its dual management of the economy with two "hands", providing additional stability and using state governance mechanisms to prevent market failures.

To continue and build on this success, China must adapt its development strategy to the changed environment. China's external development environment has changed. The West is dismantling international production and sales chains involving China, increasingly blocking access to its advanced technologies. The only way forward is to improve the quality of the workforce, develop education and science, and support innovative developments. Chi-

na seeks to modernize its industrial base and enhance self-reliance in key technologies that are currently controlled by the West.

Chinese reforms began in the late 1970s under the slogan "peace and development", a key innovative formulation of Deng Xiaoping. Chinese reformers understood that China had an excellent opportunity to achieve an economic breakthrough in a peaceful and stable environment. This favorable opportunity was fully utilized by China during the first three decades of reform.

The phrase, "cross the river by feeling the stones", gained worldwide fame. China reformed its planned economy using numerous experiments. Now, the demands for decision-making quality have increased significantly. For this reason, "top-down design" has assumed a leading role. In modern conditions, to ensure high-quality strategic planning and the practical implementation of decisions, unified centralized leadership of the CPC Central Committee is especially necessary.

Development remains a central theme for China, but it is increasing-

ly accompanied by the term "security" in Party documents. The resolution adopted by the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC reflects the effort to organically combine the achievement of high-quality development goals with the protection of national security in all areas, including economic and technological security.

In his speech at the third plenum, President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, reminded the country that China should prepare for unfavorable scenarios. At any moment, a "black swan" could appear, or a "gray rhino" could surface. This reminder reflects the CPC's significant attention to ensuring heightened resilience to risks.

Unexpected developments should not cause a substantial slowdown in China's economic growth.

The West is making considerable efforts to contain China on all fronts. China understands that giving in to Western pressure would result in losses rather than gains.

While a complete collapse of China's economy would be too dangerous for global economic stability, the United States is keen to secure concessions from China that would long delay its economic development, easing competitive pressures on Western producers.

The Western arguments for changing China's economic model are well-known. They claim that China has "excess production capacity" that floods Western markets with its products, which are supposedly cheap only due to state subsidies. Currently, there is a large number of Chinese goods, and they are highly competitive. Therefore, the West's interest lies in reducing the availability of these goods and making them as expensive as possible.

The West is eager to force China to reduce its presence in foreign markets, thus eliminating competition from Chinese high-tech products. However, the decisions of the third plenum of the 20th CPC Central Committee indicate China's determination to invest even more efforts and resources into developing advanced industries and acquir-

ing new technologies. This is not just about independently replicating today's advanced technologies but also about investing in the technologies of the future.

That is why the concept of new quality productive forces was put forward. President Xi first spoke of the creation of new quality productive forces in September 2023. Speaking in Heilongjiang province, he called for the development of "strategic new industries", including new energy, new materials, advanced manufacturing and information technology, in order to "strengthen the new driving force for development". The concept of new quality productive forces reflects an updated understanding of the requirements for China's economic innovation growth in light of unfavorable external changes.

The author is deputy director of Scientific Work and head of the Center for Asia-Pacific Studies of the Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations at the Russian Academy of Sciences.

# CHINA

## A bullish encounter

Captivating spectators, two bulls engage in a combat during a local traditional bullfighting event held to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival in Pingliu village, Sanjiang Dong autonomous county, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, on Wednesday. The Dong ethnic bullfighting tradition, with a history spanning several hundred years, serves as a significant cultural practice of the local people as they celebrate the harvest and offer prayers for a prosperous yield in the following year.

GONG PUKANG / FOR CHINA DAILY



## New measures to fill the gap in VC market

State Council meeting recognizes vital role of venture capital industry

By WANG KEJU  
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China will unveil a series of new measures aimed at promoting the development of the country's venture capital industry, recognizing its vital role in driving technological innovation, industrial upgrading and high-quality economic growth, the State Council, the country's Cabinet, said on Wednesday.

A reform package will be rolled out aimed at addressing the pain points across the VC investment life cycle — from fundraising and financing to post-investment management and capital exit, according to the State Council executive meeting chaired by Premier Li Qiang.

The decision came after China's VC market, as shown by data from the First New Voice, a Beijing-based research institute, experienced a sharp decline in the first half of the year.

The total investment amount across the entire VC market dropped by around 30 percent year-over-year, while the number of investment deals and the total capital invested also fell by nearly 40 percent, according to the institute.

Moreover, according to RimeData, a data service provider dedicated to the VC market, 2,063 new private equity and VC funds were launched in the first six months of the year, a 475 percent decrease compared to the same period last year. The total registered capital

raised by these new funds was 664.9 billion yuan (\$93.87 billion), a 28.3 percent year-over-year decline.

The meeting stressed that dedicated efforts will be made to support the domestic and overseas public listing of venture-backed technology enterprises, and develop robust secondary markets for equity transfers and mergers and acquisitions.

Ever since the new filing regulations for overseas listing took effect on March 31 last year, the China Securities Regulatory Commission has received such filings from 158 Chinese mainland companies as of mid-June, among which 85 floated in the Hong Kong bourse and 73 went public in the United States.

Steps to promote the pilot implementation of in-kind distribution of stock shares have been adopted at the meeting, alongside incentivizing private capital to establish market-oriented merger funds and secondary VC funds, all aimed at fostering a positive cycle within the VC ecosystem.

Policymakers will also work to transform state-owned capital into patient capital investment force, that is willing to forgo short-term gains in favor of sustainable growth and value creation over the long run, according to the meeting.

The Cabinet meeting also called for efforts to improve the policies and mechanisms around state capital deployment, performance evaluation, tolerance for mistakes and exit procedures.

## War hero reflects on a life of service and sacrifice

By JIANG CHENGLONG  
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Tears start to well up in 93-year-old Huang Zongde's eyes even now when he hears the song that was sung across China during the War to Resist United States Aggression and Aid Korea (1950-53).

Huang, who joined the military at the age of 17, was awarded last week the nation's highest honor, the Medal of the Republic, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

He is a recipient of a series of honors, including the Second-Class Combat Hero title, first-class and second-class merit awards and the Order of the National Flag (First Class) from Democratic People's Republic of Korea, according to Xinhua News Agency.

Huang often recalls the names of his fallen comrades, saying "I am a survivor; they are the true heroes!"

In 1952, Huang was sent to the bat-

tlefield of the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea (1950-53).

In July 1953, the company where Huang served in the Chinese People's Volunteer Army participated in a counterattack. The battle raged throughout the night, and by the end of the fight, only 13 men remained in the company.

The next day, Huang encountered remnants of the enemy hiding in a tunnel all by himself. Despite his submachine gun being damaged and a wound to his right chest, he did not retreat.

With a determination to sacrifice himself, Huang used his only grenades and explosives to blow up the tunnel. The enemy surrendered one after another, according to Xinhua.

In this battle, Huang destroyed three enemy bunkers, killed seven enemies, and single-handedly captured 22. More than 70 years have passed,

but he still breaks down in tears when recalling his fallen comrades.

"They are the heroes. I accepted the honor on their behalf," he said.

Born in 1931 to a poor farming family in Rongcheng, Shandong province, Huang's brother-in-law and



Huang Zongde

sister were underground Party members. In December 1948, 17-year-old Huang enlisted in the army, becoming a soldier in the coastal defense brigade of Rongcheng.

In April 1949, the People's Liberation Army launched the Yangtze River Crossing Campaign, in which Huang participated. "I couldn't swim, but I had one belief: I must not die here; we must liberate all of China," he recalled.

Reflecting on his revolutionary journey, Huang said he was so

proud to join the Communist Party of China in 1949, the year in which the PRC was founded.

"In June 1949, in a dilapidated temple in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu province, I took the oath to join the CPC," he said. "The Party nurtured me from a poor youth into a revolutionary soldier," Huang added.

Wang Jinhua, 88, is married to Huang for 67 years. Talking about her husband, Wang said, "He rarely talks about his past combat experiences with me or our children." To her, he is just an ordinary soldier.

Wang recalled, "All our three children were born while he was in the army, not by my side," noting that her husband was always devoted to his work and rarely took care of the family.

Meng Wei, the political commissar of his retirement sanitarium, said that Huang has served as an off-campus instructor for many primary and secondary schools and has given dozens of lectures in government agencies, enterprises and communities.

## Embracing the spirit of innovation and abundance

As we move on to even greener pastures, more farmers are reaping the benefits of digital technology. Internet-connected infrastructure and a future blossoming with opportunities for green growth. With the digital world at their fingertips, they can unleash the power of innovation to welcome a more bounteous harvest than ever before.

# BUSINESS

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## Florasis opens outlet in Paris

By ZHU WENQIAN  
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Huaxizi, or Florasis in English, a Chinese beauty brand with cultural and aesthetic attributes, has opened an outlet at Paris department store Samaritaine, becoming the sole Chinese beauty brand to operate a physical shop in Europe.

The Hangzhou, Zhejiang province-based company said it would like to continue expanding its footprint globally, launching more stores in countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, such as the Middle East. Globally, Florasis also sells its products through an offline Cosme store in Osaka, Japan.

As China and France celebrate their 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, Florasis cooperated with the global luxury travel retailer DFS to launch its new shop in Paris. The department store Samaritaine, located on the banks of the River Seine, has been a landmark of Paris with 154 years of history.

The design of Florasis' cosmetics counter applies elements of a traditional Chinese garden, and promotes some of its best-selling products such as lipsticks, powder and liquid eye shadow, as well as a series of products designed with the Mongolian ethnic minority's cultural elements for its packaging. "In October, we also plan to



A consumer chooses products at the counter of Florasis in Paris. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

launch a number of limited edition products with Chinese embroidery elements, as we aim to provide some unique cultural experiences for overseas consumers," said Gabby Chen, president of global expansion at Florasis.

"We hope to further promote the global strategic layout through cooperation with international luxury travel retailer DFS. While building up our international influence, we aim to bring Oriental aesthetics and culture to consumers of more countries and regions."

Xia Tian, a Chinese student who studies abroad, said she felt so proud to see the launch of a Chinese cosmetics brand shop in Paris, and many tourists came to the counter to experience the products. A Belgian consumer named

Amelie said it was the first time that she tried out Chinese makeup, and the products boast unique designs that feature Eastern elements and patterns.

Delphine Herve Turra, merchandising director of DFS France, said the company has noticed the growth momentum of Chinese beauty brands in China, and DFS appreciates the brand concept of Florasis as well as the cultural value it conveys.

"Its high-quality product lineup and unique designs have demonstrated significant growth potential in the international market, providing a unique choice for the French market. Next, we plan to introduce Florasis to more DFS stores globally," said Herve. In 2023, the total export value

of Chinese cosmetics reached 26.37 billion yuan (\$3.7 billion), growing 39.3 percent year-on-year, according to data from the General Administration of Customs.

In the past few years, the rapid development of e-commerce channels and livestreaming sessions in China has provided good exposure and promotional sales channels for emerging China-chic brands, said Lou Lei, executive director of consultancy Frost & Sullivan China.

"Also, young Chinese consumers have indicated an increasingly stronger national self-confidence and higher spending power, and they would like to pursue personalized styles. Such a trend has provided a strong boost for the growth of China-chic brands," Lou said.

## Fed moves set to give PBOC more options

China entering key period for monetary policy, eyes RRR and interest rate cuts

By ZHOU LANXU  
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China's central bank may soon opt for more easing moves as the United States is poised for an interest rate cut cycle, as headwinds are emerging amid efforts to stabilize domestic economic momentum, analysts said on Wednesday.

Possible measures include a reduction in the reserve requirement ratio — the proportion of deposits banks must keep as reserves, or a cut in lending rate benchmarks and mitigation in financial burdens of outstanding mortgages, they said.

"We anticipate that China is entering a key period for monetary policy, in which the probability of cuts in the RRR and interest rates as soon as possible is increasing," said Wu Chaoming, deputy director of the Chasing International Economic Institute.

"Measures such as intensified use of structural tools and reduction of existing home loan rates are also worth looking forward to," Wu said.

The US Federal Reserve's shift in policy stance will create more favorable conditions for China to cut interest rates, Wu said, adding that domestic factors also point to the rising possibility of rate cuts, including insufficient demand, weakening momentum of month-on-month economic growth and elevated real interest rates.

He added that the necessity has significantly increased for an RRR cut in the near term, which would coordinate with strengthening fiscal support, alleviate pressure on commercial banks and mitigate the impact of a large volume of maturing medium-term lending facilities on market liquidity.

The Fed held its latest Federal Open Market Committee meeting from Tuesday to Wednesday and had yet to disclose interest rate decisions of the meeting up to the deadline for this story's publication.

Analysts, nevertheless, said it was a foregone conclusion for the Fed to cut rates on Wednesday, either 25 basis points or 50bp, as US inflation has eased while the labor market softened.

Mark Haefele, chief investment officer of UBS Global Wealth Management, said that in a base case forecast scenario in which the US economy will achieve a soft landing,

there is room for 100bp of interest rate reductions this year and another 100bp in 2025.

Yang Delong, chief economist at First Seafrost Fund, said the Fed entering a rate cut cycle has provided a firm foundation for the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, to implement a relatively loose monetary policy.

This is because the renminbi has started to appreciate against the US dollar upon anticipations of narrowing US-China interest rate spreads, Yang said, adding that August data, especially lukewarm retail sales growth, indicated that China's economic growth still needs consolidation.

Retail sales, an indicator of consumption, grew by 2.1 percent year-on-year in August, down from 2.7 percent in July, official data showed. Industrial output and fixed-asset investment also decelerated last month while the expansion in broad money supply remained steady.

The PBOC said last Friday it will introduce additional policy measures to reduce financing costs for enterprises and households and maintain reasonable and sufficient liquidity, after a PBOC official acknowledged room for further RRR cuts.

On Friday, China is scheduled to release the latest loan prime rates, or market-based lending rate benchmarks. China last cut the LPRs in July, with the one-year and over-five-year LPRs both down 10bp to 3.35 percent and 3.85 percent, respectively.

Lou Feipeng, a researcher at Postal Savings Bank of China, said it may be "good timing" to further cut the LPRs on Friday, adding that additional policy support is needed to achieve the annual economic growth target of about 5 percent.

"The pace of interest rate cuts should be accelerated in accordance with the principle of sooner rather than later. September is good timing for this move. Timely rate cuts will help reduce financing costs and achieve better policy effect in the fourth quarter."

Lou added that it is also necessary to reduce housing provident fund loan rates proportionally if the over-five-year LPR, on which lenders base their mortgage rates, is lowered.

## 30,000+ buyers to attend Global Digital Trade Expo

By FAN FEIFEI  
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The third Global Digital Trade Expo, which will take place in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang province, from Sept 25 to 29, is expected to provide significant opportunities for bolstering the growth of digital trade and inject strong impetus into the high-quality development of the digital economy, officials and experts said on Wednesday.

Leading companies from 25 countries and regions will participate in the expo, while the number and exhibition areas of international exhibitors will account for more than 20 percent of the total, said Tang Wenhong, assistant minister of commerce, at a news conference in Beijing.

Tang said nearly 400 new products and about one quarter of the new technologies will be showcased by foreign companies, and the number of international buyers will be nearly three times that of

the previous expo.

Featuring Kazakhstan and Thailand as guests of honor, the upcoming expo will set up a future-oriented industry exhibition area for the first time, showcasing cutting-edge technologies in fields such as intelligent robots and the low-altitude economy, he said, adding that digital humans and naked-eye 3D technologies will be leveraged to enhance on-site interaction.

Tang emphasized that the digital trade has become a new development trend of international trade and an important growth driver for the global economy. The Commerce Ministry will step up policy support, improve laws and regulations, and accelerate the formulation of standards in the field of digital trade, he said.

China's import and export of digitally-delivered service trade rose 3.7 percent year-on-year to 1.42 trillion yuan (\$200.4 billion) in the first six months of 2024, a new record-high, according to the Min-

istry of Commerce.

Moreover, the report on China's digital commerce development will be released at the expo for the first time, showcasing China's achievements and outlook in the digital commerce, given that the country places great emphasis on facilitating the development of digital economy.

Lu Shan, vice-governor of Zhejiang, said at present, over 1,500 companies have confirmed their participation, and more than 30,000 professional purchasers have registered and are expected to join in the procurement activities.

The expo will feature a comprehensive exhibition area and eight specialized zones dedicated to various digital industries, such as Silk Road e-commerce, data and finance, and artificial intelligence, Lu added.

He noted that Zhejiang has made great efforts to promote the innovative development of digital trade and the construction of compre-

hensive pilot zones for cross-border e-commerce, with the export scale of cross-border e-commerce ranking second across the nation.

China's cross-border e-commerce sector has seen robust growth in recent years, becoming an important driving force for bolstering development of the nation's foreign trade, industry experts said.

The country's cross-border e-commerce imports and exports reached 1.22 trillion yuan in the first half of this year, an increase of 10.5 percent year-on-year, data from the General Administration of Customs showed.

Zhang Zhouping, a senior analyst at the Internet Economy Institute, a domestic consultancy, said digital trade is a new engine for China's endeavor to build itself into a stronger trade nation, while cross-border e-commerce has emerged as a vital channel for small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises to expand in overseas markets.

### Briefly

#### Renminbi strengthens against greenback

The central parity rate of the Chinese currency renminbi, or the yuan, strengthened 160 pips to 7.087 against the US dollar on Wednesday, according to the China Foreign Exchange Trade System. In China's spot foreign exchange market, the yuan is allowed to rise or fall by 2 percent from the central parity rate each trading day. The central parity rate of the yuan against the US dollar is based on a weighted average of prices offered by market makers before the opening of the interbank market each business day.

#### Changan expands AVATR to Thailand

Changan Automobile officially launched its premium electric vehicle brand AVATR in Thailand on Tuesday, in a move to expand its presence in the Southeast Asian country's upscale automotive market. The introduction of the AVATR 11, an SUV coupe, marks Changan's fourth model in the country, following launches of the Deepal L07 and S07 last year and the Lumin L earlier this year.

XINHUA - CHINA DAILY

## Technological innovation, upgrades key to decarbonization success

By LIU YUKUN  
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The ongoing global shift toward decarbonization requires further efforts to promote technological innovation and optimized industrial management, while international collaboration is increasingly seen as essential in this regard, said experts.

Liu Zhenmin, China's special envoy for climate change, said: "Amid global transition to green energy, large-scale integration of power generated from intermittent new energy sources to the grid, clean and efficient utilization of fossil fuels, as well as development of low-carbon industries such as carbon capture, utilization and storage — and a new power system — all rely on technological innovation. Technological innovation is crucial for global decarbonization and enhancing countries' abilities to adapt to climate change."

Liu added that fostering innovative talent and promoting global cooperation for win-win outcomes

are essential for technological innovation.

He Kebin, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and a professor at Tsinghua University's School of Environmental Sciences, said: "Carbon neutrality is a process that will take several decades. The most challenging phase at present involves reducing carbon emissions through restructuring our energy systems. To address this issue, we need to focus on diversifying energy sources as well as developing an optimized power supply system that can better coordinate between generators, the grid network, power loads and energy storage facilities. Building an organic system requires long-term efforts."

Experts noted that for businesses, reducing emissions requires breaking away from traditional development modes, inevitably leading to increased costs. However, over the long run, achievements in emission reductions, facilitated by new technologies and new production methods, will bring about

new benefits that align with the long-term interests of businesses.

Taking State Grid Corp of China as an example, the large-scale integration of power generated from intermittent new energy sources into the grid poses new challenges for grid stability, making grid upgrades and renovations a priority.

Recently, State Grid Changxing Power Supply Co announced that a 500-kilovolt power transmission and transformation project will be put into operation in Changxing county, Zhejiang province in the first quarter next year, with a total investment of 1.4 billion yuan (\$203 million).

The move is to address grid stability issues and better integrate power generated from new energy sources like wind and solar power.

Once operational, the project will increase the power transformation capacity in Changxing county, Zhejiang province, by 35 percent and provide an annual power supply capacity of 7 billion kilowatt-hours. The main bodies of the two sets of six transformers for this project



A new wind turbine model on display during a recent expo in Beijing. LI XIN / XINHUA

have been installed, and construction of the corresponding supporting transmission lines has been fully initiated.

Despite major investment, upon completion of this project, significant reductions in energy loss during power transmission can be expected. State Grid Changxing said the move will also optimize energy consumption structure in Changxing county as it allows more wind and solar power onto the grid, providing enhanced energy security

for local economic development. Guo Chengzhan, head of the China Association of Environmental Protection Industry, said that achieving a balance between the economic and environmental benefits of enterprises is a long-term endeavor. From source control to process management — aside from technological breakthroughs — an upgrade in management is also necessary to achieve coordinated and sustainable development.

# BUSINESSFOCUS

By LIU YUKUN in Beijing  
and ZHU XINGXIN in Taiyuan

Autumn, the traditional harvest season in China, breathes life into the Yunzhou district of Datong, Shanxi province. Fields of golden blooms stretch as far as the eye can see, as workers move with purpose through the fields. The process is meticulous — flowers are washed, packed, blanched, dried and boxed with precision.

The once unassuming city of Datong is now becoming the nation's citron daylily hub, producing a quarter of the country's total output. This once overlooked industry now plays a crucial role in the local economy, improving farmers' lives and drawing tourists from across the nation.

From cultivation and harvesting to processing and sightseeing, the citron daylily industry has formed a mature supply chain, generating revenue of 4.2 billion yuan (\$592 million) a year. These flowers are not just a local treasure, they are exported to markets in the United States, Canada, Japan and other countries and regions.

Tang Wan, a citron daylily grower in Yunzhou, and his wife enter their field every night around 11 pm to harvest the flowers until dawn. He said high-quality flowers must be picked while still in bud form, before the sunlight causes them to bloom and lose their value.

Typically, the couple harvests over 100 kilograms of flowers and earns around 500 yuan per night.

Tang's hometown, Yunzhou, provides an ideal environment for citron daylily cultivation, which benefits from abundant sunlight, significant temperature variations and nutrient-rich soil.

Yet, the going was not without challenges. Before the citron daylily industry gained momentum, local farmers like Tang struggled with the unpredictability of weather and the long cultivation cycle of yellow flowers, which take four years to mature and do not allow growers to make a profit straightaway.

Tang's early attempts were thwarted by drought, forcing him to abandon his first crop and return to corn farming. "For three years, I planted and dug up, planted and dug up, over and over again," Tang recalled.

A turning point came in 2012, when Yunzhou identified the yellow flowers as a strategic crop for poverty alleviation. The local government launched a series of supportive measures like crop insurance to further alleviate farmers' concerns like unstable income, accelerating the expansion of yellow flower cultivation.

The results have been remarkable. By the end of last year, the planting area had expanded from under 667 hectares to 11,333 hectares, yielding 120,000 metric tons of fresh citron daylily and receiving an annual output value of 700 million yuan. This boom has increased farmers' annual incomes by an average of 5,000 yuan per person. Products now extend from vegetables and beverages to cosmetics and cultural goods, with a combined industry chain value of 2.2 billion yuan.

Tang's farm has grown from a modest 0.07-hectare plot to a 2.3-hectare operation.

"Agricultural experts now guide us through every stage. After harvesting, the flowers are collected by the

## Datong emerging as China's citron daylily hub

City in Shanxi produces 25% of country's output, driving local economy, tourism



**Top:** Workers pick citron daylily buds at a plantation in Yunzhou district of Datong, North China's Shanxi province. **Left:** Citron daylily buds at a plantation in Yunzhou district. **Right:** Employees transport freshly picked citron daylily buds at a plantation in Yunzhou district. PHOTOS BY ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

factory, and we get paid on-site, so we don't worry about sales," Tang said.

Since 2020, his annual income has doubled, allowing him to buy a car and a house.

As the industry continued to flourish, Yunzhou officials are actively working to sustain this

momentum. They encouraged village leaders to purchase flowers from local farmers and streamline the transportation and processing chain, ensuring that the benefits of this golden bloom are shared across the community.

Zhang Wei, head of the villagers

committee which manages the administrative affairs of Tangjiabao village in Yunzhou, said that the lack of a platform and bridge for communication between farmers and agricultural enterprises was an important reason hindering the citron daylily industry's growth.

Datong Sanli Group is one of the largest citron daylily production and processing enterprises in Yunzhou. Zhao Jiayao, general manager of e-commerce at Datong Sanli, said that the typical flow after flowers enter the processing plant includes weighing, unloading, cleaning, wilt-

ing, steaming, drying, selecting and packaging.

After more than two decades of development, Datong Sanli Group has four major factories, establishing a complete citron daylily industry chain encompassing procurement, processing, research and development, logistics, electronic warehousing and tourism.

Its products include dried citron daylily, citron daylily sauce, cakes and beverages. Zhao said that these yellow flower products have become specialty gifts that tourists and online shoppers buy.

The citron daylily processing sector in Datong is showing strong development momentum and Sanli is not the only company that has benefited from the trend.

Yang Qi, head of Datong Huaqingcheng Field Agriculture Development Co Ltd, a local enterprise, said: "We employ over 40 workers all year round and increase the number to over 150 during peak seasons. Our processed products like citron daylily meat sauce and vegetarian sauce have been sold to over 20 provincial capitals nationwide. This year, we expect to sell 600-800 tons of dried citron daylily across the nation."

Many local enterprises are actively engaging in product research and development. Datong Dawei Huang Food Co Ltd has developed a series of innovative desserts such as citron daylily cakes, syrup-bursting citron daylily cakes, citron daylily beef cakes and citron daylily croissants. They also launched the citron daylily pre-made self-heating hotpot last year.

An increasing number of young people see hope in the development of the industry and are joining related businesses. Pang Ershun is one of them, who took over from his father and now runs Datong Sanli Group.

Pang fully utilized his familiarity with internet technologies to sell locally produced citron daylily products on e-commerce platforms. He has also signed purchase contracts with many farmers, ensuring a certain amount of purchases per year.

The emergence of new industries driven by citron daylily development goes far beyond the examples discussed above. During summer vacation in Yunzhou, Forget-Worries Farm, an entertainment project encompassing farming and tourism, has attracted many schools and educational institutions for camping, Corporate team-building, tourists' experience of harvesting citron daylily and other projects are popular activities.

Located in Tuofoang village of Yunzhou, Forget-Worries Farm was established eight years ago by an economic organization of a local village. It transformed an abandoned greenhouse for its business.

The farm is now collaborating with local universities to establish a research base to find methods to increase the yield and quality of citron daylily, resist diseases and pests, and develop beauty and health products using the yellow flowers' essence as the main ingredient. The farm regularly conducts study tours and leisure activities for families.

Duan Yaping, who is in charge of the farm's operation, said, "By integrating agriculture, culture and tourism, we hope to turn the small yellow flowers into a big industry, increasing the income of local farmers."

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## Transformed lives bloom on yellow flower biz boom

By LIU YUKUN in Beijing  
and ZHU XINGXIN in Taiyuan

Young people have been flocking back to their native place Datong in Shanxi province to exploit business opportunities spawned by the vibrant growth of the citron daylily industry.

For instance, Zhang Wei, who was born in the 1980s and studied in Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi, decided to return to his home village Tangjiabao in 2021. That year, he participated in the village's elections and was appointed as head of the villagers committee.

"At that time, many people around me couldn't understand why I would give up the glitz of the big city to return to a small village. Besides sentimental attachment to my homeland, I saw more opportunities for the development of the local citron daylily industry," Zhang said.

Tangjiabao village has a long tradition of planting such yellow flowers. Currently, the village has a total land area of over 353 hectares, with

around 267 hectares dedicated to citron daylily cultivation. Almost all of its 412 households are involved in planting, cultivation or business related to the yellow flowers.

Zhang's first challenge upon taking office was to promote the transition of citron daylily cultivation from a cottage industry to industrial-scale development. The path of reform was not without challenges. Zhang said that gaining the trust of the villagers was the first hurdle.

"Initially, many measures may not have been understood by the villagers, but as they experienced tangible benefits and conveniences, they became actively involved, offering suggestions and working together to expand and strengthen the industry."

Currently, Tangjiabao village has mechanized various processes such as weeding, fertilization and soil moisture monitoring, and smart agriculture techniques are widely applied in the village's citron daylily cultivation. This has significantly

increased efficiency, leading to a rise in the average annual disposable income per capita in Tangjiabao from 9,800 yuan (\$1,383) in 2020 to 17,500 yuan last year.

In recent years, Zhang has also organized officials to visit other cities for study tours. Apart from increasing income from citron daylily cultivation and picking, they are actively expanding the industry chain to generate more revenue streams.

In the second half of 2022, the village began constructing the "Forget Worries Township", which officially opened for operation in July this year. In addition to sightseeing, the program offers activities like educational tours, flower picking and rural homestays. This year, the Tangjiabao has also expanded entertainment activities like building a "music road" and a shared campsite located in the south of the village.

"We hope that the cultural and tourism industry in the village, centered around citron daylily, can

form a chain to attract more visitors to stay longer," Zhang said.

Pang Ershun, born in the 1990s, is now general manager of Datong Sanli Group, one of the city's largest agricultural companies. Taking over the family business from his father, Pang often feels the weight of responsibility.

"My grandfather and father were agricultural managers. In the 1990s, they collected citron daylilies, traveled across the country, and sold them to food makers and supermarkets. From planting on a family scale to industrial-scale farming, they witnessed the growth and strengthening of the citron daylily industry in Datong."

Today, Datong Sanli Group has four factories, establishing a complete citron daylily industry chain that includes procurement, processing, research and development, logistics, electronic warehousing and tourism.

"We are currently developing new products like citron daylily tea and beer, while also expanding sales



Sellers promote citron daylily bud products at a livestreaming booth in Tangjiabao village in Datong, Shanxi province. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

channels for traditional products like dried flowers, citron daylily sauce, cakes and beverages. For instance, we are exploring livestreaming, and maintaining and expanding relationships with large supermarkets," Pang said.

The group has recruited a professional livestreaming team. They go live around 7 pm every evening for

about two hours. The annual sales revenue from livestreaming can reach around 6 million yuan.

"For me, as a new-era farmer-turned-businessman, I think we need to embody the patience and endurance of the older generation, delve into the fields, while also learning to innovate, to propel industrialization of agriculture," Pang said.

## ACROSS ASIA

Editor's note:

In this weekly feature China Daily gives voice to Asia and its people. The stories presented come mainly from the Asia News Network (ANN), of which China Daily is among its 20 leading titles.

On a hot day in early August, there is a long line of people in their 20s and 30s perspiring as they stand outside hole-in-the-wall restaurant Wai Ying.

The 25-year-old eatery in Binondo, Philippine capital Manila's Chinatown, is famous for its crispy wontons and juicy roasted duck, several of which the cook has hung in front of the window overlooking the street.

Those inside pause for a moment to whip out their mobile phones and press the record button before tucking into their food. Some of these videos will get thousands of views on social media platforms.

Binondo, believed to be the oldest Chinatown in the world, has become the trendiest spot in the city for young Filipinos and tourists alike.

For those who take the time to scour its busy streets, rewards such as *tanghulu*, a candied fruit snack, and *hopia*, a flaky pastry, await at various street corners.

Centuries ago, this was one of the first places that overseas Chinese set foot in as they left their home country to find a better life for themselves.

Often arriving in host countries as traders or manual laborers, many began assembling in ethnic enclaves — their "homes away from home". Thus formed the building blocks of early Chinatowns, which to this day are recognizable across the world by their gateways and architectural features sporting traditional Chinese motifs such as dragons.

Binondo's biggest *paifang* or Chinese archway is said to be the largest among all Chinatowns and was installed in 2015 along Padre Burgos Avenue. The structure, a combination of bold colors and gold motifs, is complete with curved eaves typical of Chinese architecture.

In other Chinatowns, similar *paifang* stand, some clearly weathered with age. These arches of varying sizes, placement and style demarcate boundaries or significant points and are commonplace in ethnic Chinese neighborhoods. They present a visual link between the many Chinatowns across the world.

Throughout history, Chinese migration has occurred in waves. Many who left in the 19th century in search of better economic opportunities overseas were from Guangdong and Fujian provinces.

Attracted by the prospect of work in tin mines and rubber plantations, or in farming and trade, the Chinese headed to countries such as the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and even India. This gave rise to Chinatowns of varying traits, which adapted to their respective host societies while still maintaining universal characteristics of Chinese culture.

Meanwhile, in recent years, new Chinese communities have begun to form alongside older ones in places such as Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur, with the arrival of new immigrants, many of them affluent, educated and seeking new opportunities.

Based on available figures, UN International Migrant Stock data logged about 10.5 million Chinese nationals living outside the Chinese mainland in 2020.

However, recent local estimates have placed the figure much higher. For example, there could be at least 150,000 Chinese nationals living in Malaysia and about 110,000 Chinese citizens in Thailand.

In 2023, an expert from the Guangxi Academy of Social Sciences said *huaqiao huaren* — a collective term for Chinese overseas — could number some 60 million. Some 35 million live in Southeast Asia.

*Huaqiao* refers to Chinese nationals living overseas, while *huaren* refers to foreign citizens of Chinese descent or ethnicity.

## Philippines

Named after the Filipino word *binundok*, meaning mountainous, Binondo was established in 1594 by Spanish colonizers as a permanent settlement for Chinese traders in the Philippines.

Historians say the enclave was situated just across the Pasig River from the seat of the Spanish colonial government so officials could keep an eye on immigrants.

Intermarriage between new arrivals and locals gave birth to a vibrant fusion of Chinese and Filipino cultures that has defined aspects of life in Manila's Chinatown. The area is home to some 20,000 people today.

The best way to get to know Binondo is through its food. After all, some of Manila's oldest restaurants first opened in Chinatown — they were called *panciterias* because they sold pancit, or noodles. The oldest restaurant in the country, Toho Panciteria Antigua, opened in 1888 and is still serving customers to this day.

"When the Chinese came to Manila, they brought with them their ancestral culture and adapted to the local culture as well. You see it in the expressions of religion and food here in Binondo," cultural expert and Chinatown tour guide Ivan Man Dy, 46, told The Straits Times.

Dy, whose Chinese grandfather moved from Fujian to the Philippines in the 1930s, has conducted his famed Old Manila Walks and Tours for 19 years.

Binondo's narrow streets are lined with shops and stalls selling goods with quintessentially Chinese characteristics, from medicine to snacks like *kwok-kwok* (quail eggs deep-fried in crispy orange batter). People

A view of the *paifang* or Chinese-style archway in Malaysia's Chinatown in Jalan Petaling, Kuala Lumpur. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## CHANGING CHINATOWNS

Members of the Chinese diaspora have long traveled across Southeast Asia, establishing distinctive, vibrant enclaves that continue to evolve



People walk by a statue of legendary Chinese general Guan Yu at Kawasan Glodok Pancoran, the Chinatown in Jakarta, on Feb 12. LI ZHIQUAN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE



People take selfies in front of the New Binondo Chinatown's archway in Manila on Jan 21, 2023. GEORGE CALVELO VIA GETTY IMAGES

pray and light incense at streetside Buddhist shrines that often also display crosses and other Catholic imagery.

While social media helps to keep businesses alive, establishments must also come up with new ways to tantalize the crowds, said content creator and architect Mitch Ngo, 27, known as The Chinita Foodie online. She has drawn more than three million views for her foodie walking tour in Binondo, which she shares on social media.

"(They) have to do something new, or something that will catch people's attention, so (people) will buy from (them)," Ngo said. New establishments like Apologue Coffee and Pastry, whose interior resembles a combination of library and apothecary, have also added to the Binondo buzz.

The cafe's menu pays homage to Binondo's Chinese-Filipino history through creations such as its signature Binondo Latte, which uses sticky ube with milk and espresso, and its Pei Pa Koa Latte, featuring the traditional Chinese herbal syrup used for cough and sore throat.

## Singapore

Singapore's Chinatown was never exclusively Chinese and had small communities of Indian traders. Sri Mariamman Temple, Singapore's oldest Hindu temple, which was founded in 1827, still sits in the heart of Chinatown in South Bridge Road.

The enclave grew rapidly in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the mid-1960s, the Singaporean government stepped in to tackle overcrowding through urban renewal projects.

Residents were rehomed in resettlement estates, street hawkers were housed in Kreta Ayer Complex — now renamed Chinatown Complex — and shophouses underwent major upgrading.

Another milestone was the remaking of Chinatown, along with other ethnic districts such as Little India and Kampong Glam,

“When the Chinese came to Manila, they brought with them their ancestral culture and adapted to the local culture as well. You see it in the expressions of religion and food here in Binondo.”

Ivan Man Dy,  
a cultural expert and  
Chinatown tour guide of Manila



Malaysian ethnic Chinese walk in Kuala Lumpur's Chinatown on Feb 10. VINCENT THIAN / AP

into tourist heritage destinations in the 1980s. In many ways, the redevelopment gave these areas, which were in various states of decay, a new lease of life.

But inevitably, the redevelopment wrought changes to how people lived and worked in Chinatown. Better housing options elsewhere also saw most Chinatown residents moving out of shophouses, turning the neighborhood into a largely commercial and tourism-driven area.

Reactions to the redevelopment were not entirely positive, with many lamenting what they saw as overcommercialization and the reduction of heritage to a tourism commodity. The beauty and vibrancy of Chinatown was that its growth was driven by the people who lived there, said historian Loh Kah Seng. Today, the communal and lived-in character of Chinatown has changed.

"As a tourist area, it'll still be interesting for locals and foreigners to visit. For now, there are still residual areas where seniors gather and meet old friends, and you can see traces of old Chinatown," said Loh, who is the director of research consultancy Chronicles Research and Education.

Other changes have come to Chinatown, with Singapore becoming a notable destination for Chinese nationals to work, live and holiday in.

In the first six months of 2024, Chinese tourists formed the biggest group of visitors to Singapore, with about 1.45 million visitors, according to the Singapore Tourism Board.

Old-time Chinatown business owners and residents have long noted the influx of more Chinese mainland businesses and tourists in Chinatown, with some replacing more intrinsically Singaporean businesses and cultures.

Pek Sin Choon, a 99-year-old Chinese tea business in a shophouse in Mosque Street, has seen its fair share of rapid changes, both in its business environment and physical surroundings.

Its longtime neighbors on either side — Tai Thong Cake Shop, a 73-year-old family-owned Cantonese bakery known for hand-made mooncakes, and a coffee shop — are now gone. They are replaced by a Moutai retail store selling the famous Chinese grain spirit of Guizhou province and a restaurant specializing in the cuisine of Sichuan province, both tracing back to Southwest China. The new businesses cater primarily to Chinese visitors.

Tai Thong ceased operations in October 2023, when no one in the third generation took over.

For Kenry Peh, Pek Sin Choon's fourth-generation owner, the influx of Chinese tourists and new businesses is something he has come to terms with, but said that as heritage brands like Tai Thong wind up their business, "we'll be missing a part of history".

In a bid to both preserve and rejuvenate the spirit of the original Chinatown, the authorities are rejigging the tenant mix in the historical conservation area.

Over the next few years, more local and international food and beverage outlets, along with creative lifestyle, retail, co-living and co-working concepts, will come up in a row of 13 shophouses in Smith Street, overseen by the Chinatown Business Association.

## Malaysia

Malaysia's centuries-old famous Chinatown in Kuala Lumpur has also undergone some demographic changes. In recent years, it has seen an inflow of residents of non-Chinese ethnicity and descent, and is no longer a settlement just for local Chinese communities.

With a growing presence of Southeast Asian and South Asian migrant workers from Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh, some shops have altered their traditional offerings to cater to new customers.

Halal or Muslim-friendly Chinese food options have popped up in the Jalan Petaling area, attracting customers from local Malay communities as well.

Dessert stall Madam Tang Machi Popo, which sells peanut-coated glutinous rice snack *muah chee*, is now run by 24-year-old Liew Mun Yee, the granddaughter of the original owner, the late Madam Tang Kwok Wang.

To cater to Muslim customers, Liew stopped selling the stall's popular red wine-flavored *muah chee* and now offers new tea-based flavors instead.

Lined with pre-war shophouses, some painted with colorful murals, Jalan Petaling Chinatown has also undergone a revival in recent years in order to attract tourists.

In particular, Kwai Chai Hong, a narrow back alley, now frequently hosts art installations and events in its restored buildings throughout the year.

## Thailand

In Thailand, the streets of Bangkok's Yaowarat area brim with tourists during the day. At night, traffic slows to a crawl as busloads of visitors swarm roadside stalls serving *rat na*, gravy noodles, on hot plates or toasted buns oozing pandan custard or chocolate.

In the narrow Plaeng Nam Road, Asian and Western tourists throng the almost century-old Khao Tom 3/1, where a variety of ready-cooked dishes, such as pork sausage and stir-fried water spinach, are served with steaming rice porridge round the clock.

Yet Noodjaree Juntarin, 52, one of the fourth generation of descendants running the family shop, said the crowds have not returned to levels before the COVID-19 pandemic.

A different picture is seen at Bangkok's Huai Khwang district, where a newer "Chinatown" has emerged, serving a different clientele.

Located just down the road from the Chinese embassy, the stretch around Pracha Rat Bamphen Road is crowded with eateries offering Lanzhou noodles, spicy hot pot and herbal teas that are popular with Chinese mainland customers. Many agencies here offer services to entrepreneurs from China wanting to start a business in Thailand.

Sociopolitical analyst Teoh Chee Keong, who specializes in Malaysian cultural and heritage studies, said it is only natural for new migrants to come and go, forming new communities in their host countries.

Kuala Lumpur's Jalan Petaling also began life as a gateway for Chinese migrants 150 years ago. In the 2000s, migrants from Southeast Asia and South Asia began to arrive. Today, the arrival of Chinese businesses and new Chinese migrants is all part of the ebb and flow of migration.

Professor Teoh, who teaches at UCSD University's School of Architecture and Built Environment, said, "Change is a permanent feature of Jalan Petaling as it still serves as a major gateway for migrants."

What has never changed, he said, is Jalan Petaling's inclusiveness of migrants.

As the Chinese left their homeland and moved to different parts of the world, they found their community and created a space where they felt they belonged.

Today, Chinatowns have put their stamp on many parts of Asia and while some have disappeared and others evolved, they still provide a tangible link for locals and visitors alike to a Chinese culture that has lasted centuries.

THE STRAITS TIMES, SINGAPORE

## WORLD

## Sino-African ties to be further strengthened

By EDITH MUTETHYA

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While the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation has greatly impacted the China-Africa relationship since its establishment 24 years ago, becoming a key platform for collective dialogue and an effective mechanism for practical cooperation between the two parties, experts believe there is more room to further strengthen the ties.

The experts expressed the need for improvement in people-to-people exchanges, trade and technology transfer among others.

Maria Nzomo, professor of international relations, diplomacy and governance at the University of Nairobi, said technological transfer could help Africa industrialize and increase manufactured goods for export.

Social-cultural exchanges between China and Africa should be increased to enhance people-to-people exchanges, Nzomo said.

She said China's collective level dealing with Africa should not end at the FOCAC summit. Instead, discussions should continue to make sure both China and African countries collectively come up with action plans to ensure impactful projects are implemented.

Nzomo said implementation of infrastructure projects like railways connecting several countries in Africa would be more impactful and aid regional integration.

Cavince Adhere, a scholar of international relations with a focus on China-Africa cooperation, applauded the bilateral relations, which have boosted bilateral trade that benefited both sides, adding that African countries should make better use of their available resources to increase exports to China.

Bilateral trade between China and Africa reached \$282.1 billion last year, making China the top trade partner for Africa for 15 consecutive years.

Africa should also think of servi-

ces as the next frontier of trade with China like e-commerce and online jobs as opposed to only focusing on goods to improve exports, he said.

African countries should also utilize provisions from China, like duty-free access to China for 33 countries in Africa, to increase their exports to the Asian powerhouse, Adhere said.

He also suggested harmonization of development programs like Kenya Vision 2030 with China's Vision 2035, as well as the African Union's Agenda 2063.

## Partnership valued

He noted the recent surveys by the Ichikowitz Family Foundation and Gallup Organization indicated that Africans greatly value the China-Africa partnership.

The Ichikowitz Family Foundation report said that African youth consider China to be the most influential power in Africa, polling 82 percent, compared to the United States at 79 percent.

Gallup indicated that China's approval among Africans rose from 52 percent in 2022 to 58 percent in 2023, while Washington's popularity fell from 59 percent in 2022 to 56 percent in 2023.

Anita Kiamba, senior lecturer in the Department of Diplomacy and International Studies at the University of Nairobi, said just like Africans have China markets in different countries across Africa, there should also be markets in Chinese cities offering beaded jewelry, handicrafts and many other goods from Africa.

Kizito Sabala, another senior lecturer from Kiamba's department, emphasized the need for technology transfer, both hard and soft.

He appreciated the scholarships that China has been offering to African students and suggested the need for a follow-up on the beneficiaries to ensure that the acquired skills are utilized back in their home countries to avoid educational wastage.

## Gaza shelter hit



A woman cries after a school used as shelter by displaced Palestinians was hit by an Israeli strike in the Shujaiya neighbourhood of Gaza City on Wednesday, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the militant group Hamas. OMAR AL-QATTAA / AFP

## 20 killed, 450 wounded in new Lebanon blasts

BEIRUT — Hand-held radios used by armed group Hezbollah detonated on Wednesday across Lebanon's south in the country's deadliest day since cross-border fighting erupted between the militants and Israel nearly a year ago, stoking tensions after similar explosions of the group's pagers the day before.

Lebanon's health ministry said 20 people were killed and more than 450 injured on Wednesday in Beirut's suburbs and the Bekaa Valley, while the death toll from Tuesday's explosions rose to 12, including two children, with nearly 3,000 injured.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was alarmed by reports that a large number of communication devices exploded across Lebanon and in Syria on Tuesday and Wednesday, his spokesman said.

The UN chief urged all concerned actors to exercise maximum restraint to avert any further escalation, and urged the parties to recommit to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) and immediately return to a cessation of hostilities to restore stability, spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

"The United Nations supports all diplomatic and political efforts to end the violence that threatens to engulf the region," said the spokesman.

Israeli officials have not commented on the blasts, but security sources said Israel's spy agency Mossad was responsible. One Hezbollah official said the episode was the biggest security breach in the group's history.

The operations appeared to throw Hezbollah into disarray and heightened fears of an escalation on its Lebanese border and wider war.

"We are opening a new phase in the war. It requires courage, determination and perseverance from us," Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said in remarks at an air force base.

Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi accused Israel of pushing the Middle East to the brink of a regional war by orchestrating a dangerous escalation on many fronts.

The United States, which denied any involvement in the blasts, said it was pursuing intensive diplomacy to avert an escalation of the conflict. A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Israel told Washington on Tuesday it was going to do something in Lebanon. But Israel did not provide details and the operation itself surprised Washington, the official said.

At least one of Wednesday's blasts in Lebanon took place near a funeral organized by Iran-backed Hezbollah for those killed the previous day, when thousands of the group's pagers exploded across the country and wounded many of its fighters.

A Reuters reporter in the southern suburbs of Beirut said he saw Hezbollah members frantically taking batteries out of any walkie-talkies that had not exploded, tossing the parts in metal barrels.

Hezbollah turned to pagers and other low-tech communication devices in an attempt to evade Israeli

surveillance of mobile phones.

Lebanon's Red Cross said on X that it responded with 30 ambulance teams to multiple explosions in different areas, including the south of Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley.

Images of the exploded walkie-talkies showed labels with "ICOM" and "made in Japan". According to its website, ICOM, which did not immediately reply to a request for comment, is a Japan-based radio communications and telephone company.

The company has said that production of model IC-V82, which appeared to be the model in the images, was phased out in 2014.

The hand-held radios were purchased by Hezbollah five months ago, around the same time as the pagers, a security source said.

In Tuesday's explosions, sources said Israeli spies remotely detonated explosives they planted in a Hezbollah order of 5,000 pagers before they entered the country.

The United Nations Security Council will meet on Friday about the pager blasts after a request by Arab states.

Tehran's ambassador in Lebanon was superficially injured in Tuesday's blasts, Iran's semi-official Fars news agency reported then. But The New York Times on Wednesday said he lost one eye and the other was severely injured when a pager he was carrying exploded, citing two members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

REUTERS - XINHUA

## US firms sanctioned for selling Taiwan arms

By ZHANG YUNBI

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Beijing announced fresh sanctions on Wednesday against nine United States enterprises in the military-industrial sector and warned that Washington's use of arms to support "Taiwan independence" will only backfire.

The sanctions came after the US Department of Defense's Defense Security Cooperation Agency confirmed on Tuesday that the US State Department had approved a \$228 million arms sale to the Taiwan region.

The sale covers the return, repair and reshipment of spare parts and other equipment essential for military aircraft.

On Wednesday, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that the move "seriously violated the one-China principle and the three China-US joint communiques, seriously interfered in China's internal affairs, and seriously undermined China's sovereignty and territorial integrity".

The nine sanctioned US companies are: Sierra Nevada Corp; Stick Rubber Enterprises; Cubic Corp; S3 AeroDefense; TCOM Limited Partnership; TextOre; Planate Management Group; ACT1 Federal; and Exovera.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian said the US arms sales to China's Taiwan region are "sending a wrong signal" to "Taiwan independence" separatist forces.

"China strongly condemns and resolutely opposes it, and has lodged solemn representations to the US side," he said.

The biggest threat to peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and the greatest damage to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait comes from the separatist activities of "Taiwan independence" forces and the connivance and support by external forces led by the US, he said.

The Democratic Progressive Party authorities' attempt to "seek independence by force" and the US persistence in "assisting independence by force" will surely backfire, reap its own consequences, and will only end in failure, he added.

Beijing's sanctions include the freezing of the nine companies' "movable and immovable property and other kinds of property" in China, as well as a ban on organizations and individuals in China from engaging in transactions and cooperation with these companies.

The Foreign Ministry said the decision will take effect on Wednesday and is based on Articles 3, 4, 6, 9 and 15 of China's Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law.

"The Taiwan question is at the core of China's core interests and is the first uncrossable red line in China-US relations," the spokesman said.

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## Tireless effort to honor Chinese Americans' WWII service stirs pride

By BELINDA ROBINSON

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They served in the US military during World War II, in an era when Chinese Americans weren't allowed to be citizens.

But thanks to the efforts of a son of one of those veterans, those who served have been rightfully honored in recent years.

Ed Gor is the national director of the Chinese American World War II Veterans Recognition Project, which he has led since 2016. It was established by the Chinese American Citizens Alliance (CACA) and the National Chinese American Citizens Alliance Community Involvement Fund.

"There's one thing that [families] all said to me. This effort to recognize them just made their experience of knowing their father, what he did, so much more important in their lives," Gor told China Daily from his home in Houston.

Gor's father, Joe, was born in Hoiping (Kaiping), in South China's Guangdong province. He immigrated to Waco, Texas, and served in the US Army Air Force during World War II.

Ed Gor's uncle, George Gor, enlisted in the US Army in December 1942. He trained in the radar unit at Camp Crowder, Missouri, and was stationed

in New Guinea.

In 2017, bipartisan legislation — the Chinese American World War II Veteran Congressional Gold Medal Act — was introduced in the US Senate and House of Representatives.

It finally passed in the Senate in September 2018; the House passed the bill in December 2018, and the legislation was signed into law by President Donald Trump later that month.

The project managed to track at least 4,000 Chinese veterans or their survivors to award them the medal, which is one of the two highest civilian awards in the US.

All participants or their relatives had to provide documentation that they had served. Many included harrowing stories.

Gor also raised funds to pay for the medals. Many contributions came from the Asian American community; one woman called and donated \$10,000.

Gor said that the veterans' grandchildren were the ones "we were trying to target as far as getting the knowledge base in, because we think many of the children already knew something, but grandchildren have to be the ones to understand the legacy of their grandfather".

The youngest of the surviving World War II veterans would be in their late 90s today.



A Navy recruiting station opened at the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association's headquarters in Los Angeles around 1942 to enlist Chinese youths for service in World War II.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE US NAVY

Of the thousands of Chinese Americans who served during World War II, 40 percent weren't citizens, according to CACA, because the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was not repealed until 1943.

Yet, Chinese Americans served in every branch of the service: the Army, Army Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine.

"When I sat at night before I went

to bed and read some of the stories, I would maybe cry," Gor said. "You know, it was so amazing to hear them talk about their dad. It made me understand how much it meant to them to remember their father if they weren't alive, but also if they were alive, how much more their dad did for them."

When the US began to recruit for the war in the 1940s, Chinatowns

were where many Asian Americans enlisted. At the time, about 29,000 people with Chinese ancestry lived in Hawaii, and an additional 78,000 lived in the continental US, according to the US Army Center of Military History.

"So, 20,000 out of 100,000, that's 20 percent of your population here to serve, which is quite remarkable," Gor said.

The attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese military on Dec 7, 1941, led the US to declare war on Japan.

Amid the war effort against Germany and Japan, Chinese Americans fought worldwide — at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, in the China-Burma-India Theatre, and in North Africa and Italy, and in the historic D-Day operation in Normandy, France.

In 1943, when the Army Air Force organized support units for the China-Burma-India Theater, it included the 14th Air Service Group, a predominantly Chinese American group. Other Chinese Americans were pilots and air crew; most were in ground units.

Chinese American women also enlisted in the US military and worked in factories, as volunteers and in other roles. Some were sent overseas. Two women — Hazel Ying Lee and Margaret "Maggie" Gee became Air Force pilots.

Another Chinese American, Captain Francis Wai, of Hawaii received the Distinguished Service Cross. He enlisted in the Hawaii National Guard and was called to active duty in 1940. His unit landed at Leyte in the Philippines in 1944. He was killed in action.

Gor has conducted medal ceremonies across the US. He observed that when the medal is given to the veterans or their families, "a lot of them said to me this is so wonderful because it brings our community so much pride and joy that the Congress of the United States recognized our dad, our mom, our uncle, brother, those people who served".

The Chinese Exclusion Act meant that for decades, many of those who had served valiantly in prior US conflicts weren't acknowledged. A small group fought in the US Civil War between 1861 to 1865, some for the Union, others for the Confederacy. During World War I between 1914 to 1918, Chinese Americans also enlisted to fight for the US.

In 2011 and 2012, the Senate and House passed bipartisan resolutions that expressed regret over the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Gor said that his medals project "wasn't just about getting this medal recognition for the families. It was as much about giving them some honor."

## CULTURAL HERITAGE



As Jiang Bo, an esteemed maritime archaeologist, stood before a photo of a large section of a battleship being raised from the sea, he was in a thoughtful mood.

Coincidentally or not, on Sept 17, 2020, the anniversary of the Battle of the Yalu River (also known as Battle of the Yellow Sea) — a major naval engagement during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) — Jiang and his colleagues brought ashore an 18.7-metric-ton component of the *Dingyuan*, the ironclad flagship of the Beiyang Fleet during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

"In the enigmatic depths, there always exists a connection," Jiang, director of Maritime Archaeological Research Center of Shandong University, mused while gazing at the photo.

*Bear in Mind the History: The Exhibition of the Sino-Japanese Naval War and Underwater Archaeological Findings From the Sunken Warships*, an exhibition at the Shandong Museum in Jinan, Shandong province, has put around 330 artifacts excavated from sunken warships on display, and offers visitors deep insight into history, as well as the poignant legacy of the war on its 130th anniversary.

The Beiyang Fleet was China's first modern navy and grew out of the determination of the Qing government to defend national security. From 1875 until the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the government ordered 46 advanced warships from the United Kingdom and Germany, and also built vessels of their own.

Despite this, the Battle of the Yalu River, which took place off the coast of Liaoning province, remains a painful collective memory for generations of Chinese. Five ships were sunk during the fierce battle, at a cost of hundreds of lives.

The Battle of Weihaiwei, off the coast of Weihai in Shandong province, the following year led to another major defeat and annihilation of the fleet, ending the dynasty's dream of turning its destiny around.

Remnants of this history lay deep underwater for over a century. Following the maiden voyage of the country's first vessel designed for underwater research in 2014, Jiang and fellow archaeologists launched a project to find physical evidence of the fleet.

In the past decade, the discovery of seven shipwrecks in the Yellow Sea has yielded a trove of thousands of precious artifacts that bear witness to fallen Chinese sailors, and to a country's strength of spirit. Painstaking study of the Beiyang flagship *Dingyuan* was probably one of the biggest achievements of the long project.

The *Dingyuan* was built in Stettin in Germany (today's Szczecin in Poland). It was considered one of the best-equipped battleships of its time.

On Feb 10, 1895, while moored in harbor, the ship was attacked by a Japanese fleet and ran out of ammunition during the Battle of Weihaiwei. It was scuttled by its crew to prevent it from falling into enemy hands.

Following the sinking of the *Dingyuan*, the Japanese managed to salvage much of the vessel, stripping it of weapons, items of daily use, cables, and coal, taking them to Japan as booty.

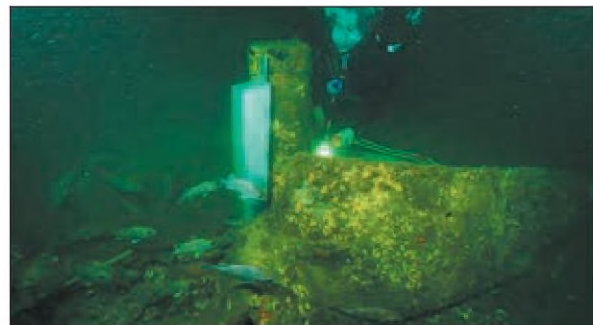
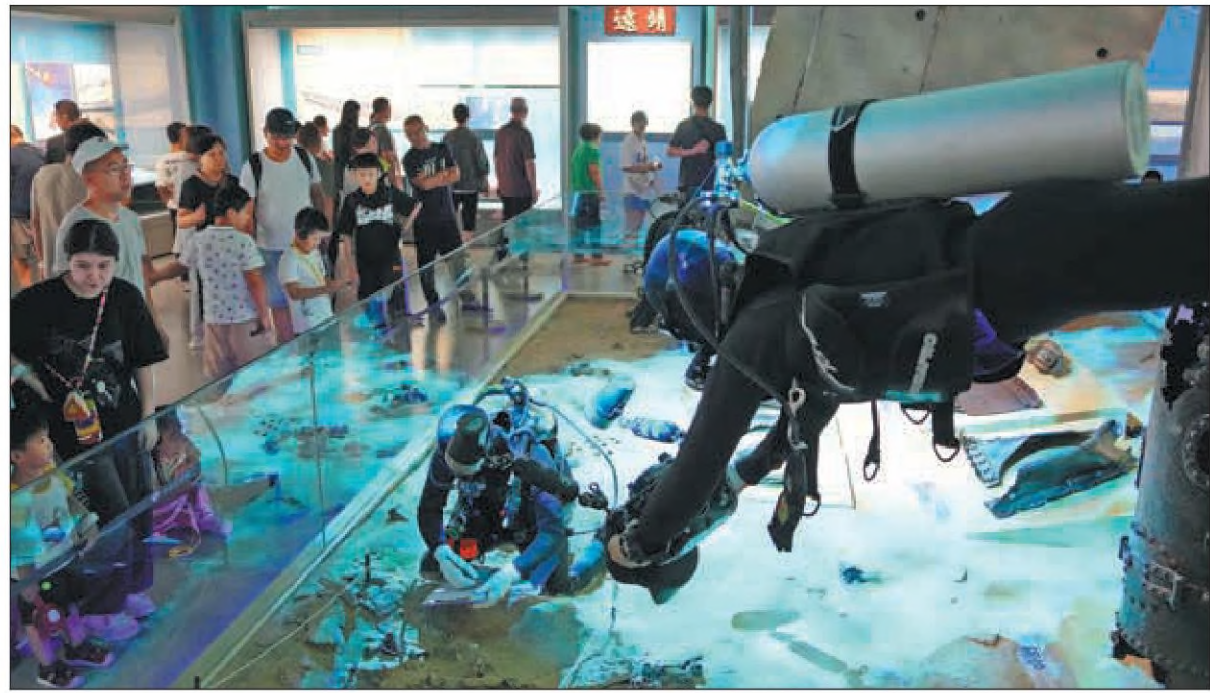
"Only the shell of the wreckage remained, settled on the seabed," says



From left: Exhibits include a sailor's sword from the *Laiyuan* armored cruiser, excavated off the coast of Weihai, Shandong province; a Gatling gun from the *Zhiyuan* cruiser, from another site in Liaoning province; and a bent copper spoon carved with the name of *Laiyuan*.

## Sea reveals fate of heroes

Wrecks from naval battles provide a new understanding of historic events, report **Zhao Ruixue** in Jinan and **Wang Kaihao** in Beijing.



Clockwise from top: A scene depicting underwater archaeology is re-created for the *Bear in Mind the History* exhibition. XU SUHUI / XINHUA  
A porthole from the *Zhiyuan*. An underwater specialist works on wreckage of the *Dingyuan* to preserve it. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Zhou Qiang, a member of the archaeological team from the Shandong Underwater Archaeology Research Center.

Their exploration of the *Dingyuan*, conducted from 2018 to 2020, revealed a significant cache of small-caliber ammunition rounds. Through the use of sonar equipment, the archaeological team was able to develop a comprehensive understanding of the ship's hull.

The 18.7-ton section lay buried under two to three meters of sediment. In 2020, after nearly two months of meticulous underwater

operations, they uncovered the ironclad component, revealing it to be a curved rectangular part of the main gun's protective armor.

In September that year, the team worked with the Guangzhou Salvage Bureau to raise the section from the seabed. On Sept 16, after a full day spent removing sand and securing cables, the remains of the *Dingyuan* were slowly raised.

As it was about to surface, adverse weather conditions caused one of the two cables to snap. Concerned that lifting the heavy piece with a single cable might result in it slipping, the

team decided to temporarily return the artifact to the seabed.

"The following day, with low visibility in Weihai Bay compounded by stirred-up sediment from sand removal, we had to rely solely on tactile senses underwater," Zhou says.

After around 10 hours of dredging, cable threading and hoisting, the piece was finally raised to the salvage vessel.

"As the component was securely placed on the salvage vessel's deck, we erupted into spontaneous applause. The excavated piece is a poignant homage to

fallen heroes," he says.

It was this moment that was captured in the photo on exhibition.

In 2022, wreck of the *Dingyuan* became the first provincial-level protection zone of underwater heritage site in Shandong.

In addition to excavated components, weapons and ammunition, the ongoing exhibition, which will last until the end of October, also displays many of the crew's daily items, including identity tags, porcelain bowls, leather shoes, mahjong tiles, chess pieces, buttons and fragrance bottles, creating a tangible connec-

tion to the past. Thanks to them, the cold record of battle is warmed by items of human interest.

Zhou found a bent silver-plated copper spoon by chance during a dive to explore the armored cruiser *Laiyuan* off the coast near Weihai in 2023, at a time when the ship's identity had not yet been confirmed.

"I couldn't see clearly underwater due to low visibility, and just happened to touch an object that looked like a spoon," he recalls.

Once on land, he saw that it was inscribed with the Chinese characters *lai yuan*, making it the first artifact from the site to identify the ship.

Two wooden identity tags retrieved from the shipwreck also helped with identification. The tags are now on exhibit after being soaked in saltwater for preservation. One of the tags has the Chinese characters for *lai yuan*, "third-class sailor", and "Yu Shengyuan", the name of the sailor in question.

The 82-meter armored cruiser was commissioned from Germany by the Qing royal court and was finished in 1887. Other articles discovered in the wreckage of the *Laiyuan* include Chinese chess sets, leather shoes, a fragrance bottle, porcelain bowls and combs. All are on display.

Some findings may help partly set the record straight. The general public has long suspected that one of the main reasons why the Beiyang Fleet lost the war was that the Qing government refused to provide the funds to update their naval facilities for a number of years.

Documents show that the fleet made a request to add new cannons to the *Laiyuan*. Shell fuses found in the shipwreck confirm that the vessel had been reinforced for conflict.

"The building of the Beiyang Fleet was a crucial attempt to modernize," Jiang says, adding that archaeological research can help clarify what had previously been questioned.

The culmination of 10 years of underwater work has not only refined methodologies for investigating shipwrecks, but also leveraged technologies, such as sonar and 3D modeling.

"The use of marine magnetometers has played an important role in locating shipwrecks," Jiang says.

The artifacts also provide significant physical evidence to researchers studying the history of a range of specialization, including the Beiyang Fleet, the Sino-Japanese War, and the history of East Asia, Jiang adds.

Zhou echoes Jiang's view.

"We plan to summarize and release reports on the seven vessels based on 10 years of underwater archaeological achievements to provide material for fields, such as the study of naval vessels and vessel equipment," he says.

A report on the cruiser *Zhiyuan*, the first Beiyang ship that was rediscovered from another site in Liaoning province, has been completed and is on show at the exhibition.

"Ships can be an emotional topic," Jiang says. "Through the remains, we see how sailors sacrificed their lives for the country. Historical study involves flesh and blood, as well as a human touch, as it goes into plentiful details."

Liu Chuan contributed to this story.

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## Key evidence found at leading base against Japanese aggression

By WANG QIAN

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In the past, historical accounts of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army, a Communist-led guerrilla force during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45), were mainly recorded in archives and documents, prompting researchers to seek more tangible evidence.

The excavation of the first anti-Japanese guerrilla base established by the Communist Party of China in the northeastern region — Hongshilazi — has provided archaeological discoveries to enhance the study of the history.

Located 20 kilometers west of Panshi city in Northeast China's Jilin province, the Hongshilazi Site, spanning about 32 square kilometers, served as a crucial base to resist Japanese aggression, and today provides remnants, such as barracks, outposts, defensive fortifications and military training grounds.

"The study of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army used to face the challenge of being 'historically

untraceable," says Meng Qingxu, leader of the Hongshilazi Site's excavation team. "In recent years, the archaeological work at the site has provided detailed materials to prove the 14-year history of the guerrilla force's resistance."

For 14 years, soldiers of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army waged an arduous struggle against the Japanese militarist aggressors.

The Sept 18 Incident in 1931, when the Japanese invaders triggered an explosion on a section of a railway owned by a Japanese company near Shenyang, Liaoning province, and falsely accused Chinese troops of sabotage, marked the beginning of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. The Japanese invaders occupied Northeast China in the following months and the "Manchukuo" puppet regime was established.

The Hongshilazi Site is widely considered the largest and among the most significant complexes commemorating Chinese people's strong resistance against the Japanese invaders in Northeast China, as it was one of the earliest anti-Japa-



An archaeologist works at the Hongshilazi Site in Panshi, a city in Jilin province, the first guerrilla base established by the Communist Party of China in the northeast during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45). PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

nese aggression bases under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. The resistance preceded the nationwide full-scale war that ultimately culminated in victory for China.

At the Hongshilazi guerrilla base, excavation teams from the Jilin Pro-

vincial Institute of Archaeology have found more than 3,300 war remnants that have shed new light on the battlefields. Designated as the eighth batch of national key cultural relic protection units by the State Council in 2019, the site was shortlisted for the country's top 10

archaeological discoveries for 2023.

The discoveries at the Hongshilazi Site have been showcased in various museums within and outside Jilin, attracting more than 700,000 visitors so far.

"Closely intertwining with the history of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army, the items selected have unveiled a vivid story at the Hongshilazi Site," says Li Qiuqiong, director of the Panshi Memorial Hall for the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.

The importance of such an exhibition is that it not only protects revolutionary relics, but also delves into the essence behind them, Liu adds.

To better protect, manage and utilize the discoveries at the sites and illuminate the war and its legacy, a meeting highlighting the cultural relics related to the period in Northeast China was held in Panshi early this month.

Officials from central and local government departments and experts from cultural relics institutes discussed how to enhance heritage protection and utilization to improve

remembrance and education.

By the end of last year, a total of 608 sites related to the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, 24 commemorative venues and about 100,000 items of cultural relics had been documented and registered nationwide, according to statistics from the National Cultural Heritage Administration.

At his speech addressing the meeting, Li Qun, director of the National Cultural Heritage Administration, called for concerted efforts to deepen the exploration of the value of these relics, and coordinate the planning and orderly progress of archaeological surveys and excavations of the sites.

To mark the 80th anniversary of the Chinese people's victory in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the end of World War II, which will fall in 2025, the National Cultural Heritage Administration, the National Development and Reform Commission, and the Ministry of Finance issued a three-year plan last year to conduct a thorough census of the relics and artifacts during the period.

## LIFE



# Puppeteer pulls at heartstrings

Practicing the complicated art form for years, young actor performs one-man show, **Chen Nan** reports.

*Riding Alone*, a one-man show by puppetry artist Hong Jindiao, featuring four types of handmade puppets — string, glove, stick and shadow puppets (above) — was staged in Beijing on Sept 6. PHOTOS BY ZHANG BONAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

In a dimly lit theater, shadows dance against the stark stage. A young actor, clad in black, stands alone, barely visible, as anticipation fills the room. The stage is shrouded in darkness, save for a spotlight highlighting the actor's hands, skillfully manipulating puppet strings.

The puppets, of various sizes and styles, glide gracefully through the darkness. The actor's movements are fluid and precise, bringing them to life with an almost magical display.

The darkness serves as a canvas, allowing the puppet stories to unfold vividly against the shadows, captivating the audience with their enchanting movements.

The young actor is 33-year-old Hong Jindiao. His one-man show *Riding Alone* features over 20 handmade puppets of four types — string, glove, stick and shadow puppets. Hong narrates the show, sings, and manipulates his puppets to the rhythms of Chinese instruments.

"Everything I have learned since I was a teenager is showcased in this production. Though it's a one-man show, I am not alone onstage, as I am accompanied by the puppets," says Hong, who staged *Riding Alone* in Beijing on Sept 6 as part of the 17th Beijing Fringe Festival, which runs until Oct 7.

Initiated by pioneering theater director Meng Jinghui, the festival features 15 theatrical productions by young talents, 17 script reading events, two forums and three screenings.

One of the puppets Hong displayed onstage is Guan Yu, the legendary general of the Eastern Han Dynasty (AD 25-220). Symbolizing traditional Chinese values like loyalty and righteousness, he serves as one of the leading roles in Hong's show. The puppet is based on the long-bearded warrior often portrayed in TV shows, movies and traditional Chinese operas — green



**Left:** Hong Jindiao displays one of his puppets, which is based on Guan Yu (left), the legendary general from the Eastern Han Dynasty (AD 25-220). **Right:** Hong interacts with the audience during the show at the Drum Tower West Theatre in Beijing.

robe, reddish face and armed with the Green Dragon Crescent Blade, a double-edged blade on the end of a pole.

While telling a well-known excerpt from the literary classic *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* by 14th-century Chinese writer Luo Guanzhong, in which Guan rides alone on a long journey to fulfill his promise, Hong also presents his own journey. With over 20 years of puppetry experience, he explores self-discovery, learning and performing experiences, inner struggles, personal growth, and the bond between puppetry masters and their students.

It's not the first time Hong has brought *Riding Alone* to Beijing. In 2023, the show was staged at the inaugural International Monodrama Festival at the Drum Tower West Theatre, a popular venue in downtown Beijing, and later toured nationwide with over 30 shows. From July 31 to Aug 4, the show was performed at the 2024 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. On Friday, it was presented at the IV International Puppet Theatre Festival "BalticPuppetwhirl" in Vyborg, Russia.

"His solid puppeteering techniques remind me of Chinese kung fu, which takes years to learn and practice. I am touched by the power he delivered in the show," says director Ding Yiteng.

"The puppets on Hong's hands are alive onstage. I was particularly touched when he ended the show by taking a bow not only to the audience but also to the puppets. He respects and loves the old art form," says Li Ting, initiator of the annual Daliangshan International Theater Festival that takes place at the foot of Daliangshan Mountain, Sichuan province.

## Beginning his journey

Hong was born and raised in Dongshi town in Jinjiang, Quanzhou, a city in East China's Fujian province, a major hub for string puppetry. According to the Quanzhou government website, the history of string puppetry dates back to the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) and came to Quanzhou during the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

In Fujian, puppet shows were traditionally performed at various life events such as weddings and



funerals, becoming an integral part of local customs.

"Each puppet is equipped with 16 to 32 strings, with the most complex having over 40. The strings are divided into several groups according to human movements, and all action is controlled solely by the puppeteer's hands," the article says. "Combined with exquisite head carvings, embroidered costumes and craftsmanship, Quanzhou's string puppetry boasts an extraordinarily intricate artistic system."

Hong's journey in puppetry began with *nanyin*, a musical art with slow, simple melodies performed on distinctive instruments like the *dongxiao* (bamboo flute) and the *pipa* (four-stringed Chinese lute). As a middle school student, he joined a *nanyin* class after school, and a year later, his teacher recommended that he study at the Quanzhou Art School, where he was drawn to the puppet class. The class needed male students, so he switched, beginning his journey in puppetry.

"My parents were open-minded about my choice, so I fully devoted myself to what I love,"

says Hong, whose family runs a seafood business.

His days at the art school were dull and monotonous, with repetitive practice sessions on finger techniques, vocal exercises and memorizing songs. As a teenager, these were not particularly pleasant memories. One summer, he was invited to the home of puppetry master Lin Wenrong. Lin taught generously, providing food and accommodation, and Hong stayed until the end of the training program. Lin, skilled in both puppetry performance and puppet-making, taught Hong how to make and assemble puppets while Hong learned head carving on his own.

One year later, Lin fell ill and had difficulty walking. Hong carried his teacher down the stairs daily to see the doctor and back up to their home. While Lin received treatment, Hong spent time at a nearby embroidery shop, learning the art of embroidery for puppet costumes.

Though he received traditional puppetry training, Hong has a different perspective on the old art form. Lin once mentioned the old puppet show *Mulian Saves His Mother*, which was

performed for 7 days and nights.

## A new chapter

"Most people don't have the patience for such a long show, but my teacher loved it very much. I want to re-stage it with my own ideas to appeal to today's young audiences," says Hong.

Traditionally, professional string puppeteers engaged only with string puppetry, the most famous and watched art form in Fujian. However, Hong believes the old art form needs to evolve.

"I want to master different puppetry skills," he says. "Old plays are fading, and audiences are dwindling. Few young actors can master and inherit all the traditional skills."

In 2018, Hong left Quanzhou to ride his bicycle along the coast through cities like Zhangzhou and Xiamen in Fujian, and Chaozhou and Shantou in Guangdong province. Taking his puppets, with about 20,000 yuan (\$2,800) in his pocket, he performed for children at welfare institutions for free. Many of these experiences left a mark on him.

His goal was to find a way to innovate his art and connect with audiences. After more than a month of traveling, he arrived in Shenzhen, met Liu Ziyuan, the head of a youth theater troupe, and decided to stay. In 2022, the Shenzhen Puppet Art Theatre was established by Liu and Hong, with Hong as artistic director. Shenzhen, a dynamic city in Guangdong province, became fertile ground for string puppetry.

During the day, Hong trains young students interested in puppetry. At night, he performs, makes puppets, writes scripts, and works on new ideas for automatons.

"I also visit my hometown to see my teacher, Lin, who is now 76. I play mahjong with him and discuss my new shows. I am happy to make him proud," says Hong.

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## Dunhuang exhibition kicks off in Auckland

AUCKLAND — The *Experience China: Dunhuang Culture Enters New Zealand* exhibition kicked off in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, on Monday.

The exhibition is jointly organized by the Information Office of the State Council and the Chinese embassy in New Zealand, and undertaken by the Gansu Provincial Information Office, Dunhuang Academy and China International Culture Group Ltd.

The exhibition features a curated selection of murals, colored sculptures and cave models from Dunhuang, Gansu province. It also displays

a digital restoration of Cave 285 of the Mogao Grottoes. These efforts allow the audience to become immersed in the historical and cultural essence of the Dunhuang Caves.

Additionally, performers from the Gansu Performing Arts Group captivated the audience at the opening with traditional Dunhuang music and dancing, offering a rich audiovisual experience.

The exhibition aims to enhance cultural exchanges between China and New Zealand while promoting people-to-people exchanges by displaying the unique charm of art



**From left:** The dance show inspired by Dunhuang arts and the exhibition of them in Auckland, New Zealand in September. PHOTOS BY LU HUIQIAN / XINHUA

from the Dunhuang Caves.

According to the organizers, Dunhuang culture is an indispensable part of the world's cultural diversity. Civilizations are richer and more

colorful with exchanges and mutual learning. They hope this exhibition can contribute to promoting the links between the two countries, fostering healthy and stable develop-

ment in bilateral relations.

"This exhibition is significant because it brings a rare opportunity for New Zealanders like myself to engage with one of the most impor-

tant cultural and religious sites in the world and fosters people-to-people exchanges," says New Zealand parliament member Jenny Salea.

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## LIFE



On Sept 7, the China NCPA Orchestra stages two concerts under the baton of German conductor Markus Stenz (right), featuring pianist Chiyan Wong (middle), with music by Strauss and Beethoven to open the orchestra's new season. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, the China NCPA Orchestra, the resident symphony orchestra of the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, announced its full program for the 2024-25 season on Sept 3. In all, 106 performances, including 11 operas, 39 concerts and five chamber music concerts, are on the roster.

Conducted by Germany's Markus Stenz, the orchestra opened its new season with two concerts on Sept 7 and 8, with programs including Beethoven's *Symphony No 5 in C Minor, Op 67* and the Chinese premiere of German composer Detlev Glanert's *Frenesia*. Hong Kong-born pianist Chiyan Wong also performed.

"This new season is exciting because the NCPA has three venues in the capital, which allow more people to enjoy classical music," says Lu Jia, the orchestra's music director and the national center's artistic director of music.

The new season has been defined under the theme of "the Created Universe", which is inspired by the classical philosophical text, the *Dao De Jing*, or the *Tao Te Ching*, the foundation of Taoism.

"We love the idea of Taoism — everything should comply with its natural attributes and be in harmony with the universe," Lu says. "It's just like the birth and growth of the symphony orchestra. We have let it develop naturally and become who we are today."

One of the highlights of the new season will be the orchestra's journey with Austrian composer Anton Bruckner, which started more than three years ago and will conclude this month. To mark the bicentenary of his birth, the NCPA orchestra will release a recording of his complete works.

It will also present Richard Strauss' symphonic poem *An Alpine Symphony, Op 64*, which musically re-creates a day of climbing in the Bavarian Alps, and will resume planning the performance and recording of 10 of Mozart's symphonies, which was shelved due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both Strauss and Mozart are demanding in terms of musical details and tones, Lu says.

According to Ren Xiaolong, general manager of the NCPA orchestra, it will be nearly 130-strong by the end of this year, in order to be able to perform at all three venues.

Next summer, it will embark on a European tour with South Korean maestro Myung-whun Chung, its first full-scale foreign tour since the pandemic.

As the artist-in-residence at the center, pianist Zhang Haochen will

## A season to celebrate

With three venues in Beijing, the China NCPA Orchestra ushers in its 15th year with a bumper crop of concerts, **Chen Nan** reports.



**Top:** (From left) Tang Ning, the NCPA's head of program operations, Ren Xiaolong, general manager of the China NCPA Orchestra, composer Guo Wenjing and violinist Li Zhe at the news conference announcing the orchestra's new season in Beijing on Sept 3.

**Above left and right:** Scenes from the first part of Wagner's epic four-opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung*, staged by the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing on Sept 3.

perform the complete piano concertos of Liszt and Rachmaninoff, and tour nationally with the orchestra.

"I have performed many concerts

at the national center, probably more often than any other concert hall in China. I also worked for a long time with the orchestra, per-

forming a concert with it soon after its establishment," Zhang says.

In 2009, at the age of 19, he won the gold medal at the 13th Van Cli-

burn International Piano Competition, becoming the first Chinese pianist to win the honor and one of the youngest gold medalists in the

history of the competition.

"I have always believed that a concert is about building a dialogue. I like to perform pieces by different composers in the same concert. The greater the difference in style, the better. It brings a different meaning and experience to the concert and to the music," he says, adding that he will perform with the orchestra for its debut performance at the 53rd Hong Kong Arts Festival next March.

Guo Wenjing, a famous musician who is the composer-in-focus for the China NCPA Orchestra's new season, will also feature in the new season. Concerts will include his *Bamboo Flute Concerto No 2*, *Wildfire* with flutist Tang Junqiao, his *Spring View, Concerto for Guzheng and Orchestra, Op 77*, with *guzheng* (Chinese zither) player Hu Xuyuan, and he will premiere his latest work, the opera *Red Sorghum*, which was commissioned by the NCPA.

"The most exciting part of our seasons is always the premiering of new pieces," says Tang Ning, head of program operations. This year, these will include three commissioned pieces: *Sentiments: Autumn Reflections* by Yao Chen, *The Story of Hua'er*, a symphonic tale by Zhao Jiping, and *Tipping Point*, a piece with an environmental theme by Huang Ruo.

Additionally, a special session, *A Life's Walk on Thin Ice*, will be held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Shostakovich's death. Conductors, including Jaap van Zweden from the Netherlands, Lawrence Foster from the United States, and Zhang Xian, will take part, leading the orchestra and soloists like violinist Ning Feng, German cellist Jan Vogler and US pianist-composer Conrad Tao, in interpreting some of the Russian composer's symphonies and concertos.

Pianist Lang Lang, who is an old friend of the center, will return next May with the "Lang Lang Music Week". He and the orchestra will perform music by French composers Saint-Saens, Ravel and Debussy, and also hold master classes.

The orchestra, the NCPA Resident Singers, and international opera stars, premiered *The Rhinegold* on Aug 30, the monumental prologue of Wagner's epic four-opera cycle *The Ring of the Nibelung*. This season, *The Valkyrie* and *Siegfried*, the two middle operas of the cycle, will premiere. Chinese operas, including *The Peony Pavilion* by Ye Xiaogang and *The Long March* by Yin Qing, will also be performed.

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## Gansu schools start semester with focus on old cultural classics

LANZHOU — Peking Opera, pottery, traditional poetry and all aspects of traditional culture are offered to students in Gansu province for the autumn semester.

"I was immediately captivated by the delicate singing of Peking Opera," says Qiang Yihan, a second-year student at the No 64 Middle School of Lanzhou, the provincial capital. Normally shy, Qiang has gradually gained confidence and can now perform a few lines with ease.

"The singing style, elaborate costumes and intricate makeup are a multilayered aesthetic experience," says Cao Xiyuan, a student who has been learning Peking Opera for four years.

Regarded as a national treasure, Peking Opera is on the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. To promote the traditional art among the young, it has been introduced to schools over the past decade.

Cui Ling, vice-principal of the Lanzhou No 64 Middle School, has been

teaching the subject for 18 years. "Students need to experience Peking Opera up close to appreciate its beauty. If we plant the seeds of traditional culture in young hearts, they will naturally draw strength from it."

Cui has developed an entire curriculum around the art and thanks to her efforts, other schools have also started Peking Opera classes.

Meanwhile, the Lanzhou No 3 Middle School in 2020 has set up a painted pottery workshop. It allows students to explore the ancient painted pottery culture of Gansu, which dates back to the Neolithic period. Under the guidance of art teacher Li Yi, the workshop has become a popular extracurricular activity.

"The students participated in the design of the workshop's layout and courses," says Li. "Their creativity in painted pottery often inspires me to learn more about it."

In class, students copy ancient patterns and make clay duplicates or



Cui Ling (second from right), vice-principal of the Lanzhou No 64 Middle School, teaches students Peking Opera skills. BAI LIPING / XINHUA

paper-cuts to develop their appreciation for the intricate designs of Gansu pottery.

The earliest examples of Gansu painted pottery were discovered at the Dadiwan Site, a Neolithic site

dating to between 8,000 and 4,800 years ago. Patterns and symbols on artifacts found at the site offer insight into the lifestyles, beliefs and worldviews of their makers.

"By engaging with pottery, stu-

Students need to experience Peking Opera up close to appreciate its beauty. If we plant the seeds of traditional culture in young hearts, they will naturally draw strength from it."

Cui Ling, vice-principal of the Lanzhou No 64 Middle School

dents not only connect with their cultural heritage but also develop an understanding of human progress and the greatness of art," Li says. She has also taken students to cultural sites and museums to deepen their

understanding of pottery.

At the Linze No 4 Middle School in Zhangye city, the new semester began with the sound of students reciting classical poetry. The 20-minute morning recitation has been a tradition at the school.

"Classical verses sometimes come to mind naturally once you are familiar with them," says Yuan Rongjuan, a student, adding that immersion in classical literature has enhanced her written and oral expression.

In addition, the school has set up a Tang Poetry Garden, which is decorated with verses from classical literature. A poetry competition is held each month to encourage students to write and compose poetry.

Principal Zhao You believes that exposure to classical poetry and traditional culture helps enhance the expressive abilities of students and stimulates their creativity.

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## COMMENT

## Editorials

## Punitive tariffs on Chinese EVs would cause irreparable damage to trade ties

With the European Union due to vote very soon on imposing tariffs of up to 35.3 percent on electric vehicles made in China, last-ditch efforts to prevent China-EU trade frictions escalating and causing damage to their mutually beneficial economic cooperation have gained a rising sense of urgency.

The EU's 27 members are scheduled to vote on Sept 25 on the tariffs proposed by the European Commission on the grounds that Chinese electric car manufacturers have unacceptable competitive advantages thanks to high subsidies from the government. The tariffs, to be imposed on top of the bloc's standard 10 percent import duty on cars, will come into force by the end of October unless a qualified majority of 15 EU members vote against the levies.

In an advisory vote in early July, 11 countries approved the provisional rates, while four voted against them, and nine abstained.

A number of EU states have since expressed their opposition to them, and have called for dialogue and consultations. "We don't need another trade war," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said during his recent visit to China, adding that his country advocates talks to prevent potential damage to trade relations.

Given that Spain was among the major EU states that supported the European Commission's proposal to impose additional duties on Chinese-made EVs in the advisory vote in July, its change of mind, which reflects "rational and objective thinking", is especially welcome as that reflection on the matter shows the wisdom of finding a political solution to the dispute.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has voiced his support for Sanchez's position, saying that this "direction of travel is one that we share". And German Vice-Chancellor Robert Habeck, in a meeting with visiting Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao on Tuesday, emphasized that the EU and China should avoid a damaging trade war at all costs.

"We absolutely want to avoid a trade conflict with spiraling tariffs that ultimately harms both sides," he said.

The EU has committed to phasing out the sale of conventional cars by 2035, and with their cutting-edge technology and products, Chinese EV companies are playing a pivotal role in driving Europe's green transportation revolution. Rather than imposing curbs on Chinese EV imports, it serves the EU's green transition ambition to deepen cooperation with China, given that its own automotive industry has been slow in shifting away from internal combustion technology.

In the age of economic globalization, restrictive trade measures will inevitably cause damage to all trading partners. Moreover, protectionist policies may fail as they often lead to higher domestic prices that reduce consumption, according to a report issued recently by the World Trade Organization.

Thus China has always called for reaching a solution with the EU in line with the WTO rules so as to avoid the escalation of the trade dispute. In an effort to ease the EU's concerns about Chinese EV imports, Chinese EV makers recently offered a minimum import price proposal, but it was rejected by the European Commission.

Olof Gill, the commission's trade spokesperson, said the commission had rejected "offers for price undertakings" by several Chinese auto exporters, as none of the offers could be "effectively monitored and enforced" to "eliminate the injurious effects of subsidies".

If the EU does impose hefty tariffs on Chinese-made EVs, it will not only disrupt the stability of the global automotive supply chain and compromise the global efforts to address climate change, but also lead to China taking countermeasures.

The commission's spokesman said that the EU remains "open to a negotiated solution", and China on its part is determined to persist in holding consultations with the EU "until the last moment". It is to be hoped that a solution can be found as a trade war is in the interest of neither side.

## Walking the talk way to stabilize relations

A US delegation made up of officials from the Treasury and Federal Reserve Board, led by Treasury Undersecretary for International Affairs Jay Shambaugh, is to meet with Chinese counterparts in Beijing on Thursday and Friday.

Reportedly, during the talks of the Economic Working Group, the US side is expected to lay out its concerns about China's economic trajectory and industrial "overcapacity".

"During our trip we will further our discussions on China's macroeconomic imbalances and industrial policies that risk causing significant harm to workers and firms in the US and around the world," Shambaugh said.

Beijing insists that the Chinese economy remains fit and resilient, and rejects the overcapacity allegation.

That being said, the discussions carried out under the Economic Working Group mechanism might become another chicken-and-duck talk.

The United States' long blacklist of Chinese entities, the exorbitant tariffs it has imposed on Chinese exports, as high as 100 percent on electric vehicles, and the great lengths Washington has been going to in a bid to coerce its allies, including Japan, the Netherlands and the Republic of Korea, to form a "chip iron curtain" against China all speak volumes of how narrow the US' definition of China's manufacturing and "overcapacity" is.

The "overcapacity" discourse of the US is nothing but an excuse for Washington to justify its politically motivated nonmarket means to stifle China's high-tech and competitive industries. The prescription Washington proposes is that China serve as an eternal lower-end manufacturing base of consumer products for the US market and open its financial sector to the US, which, if carried out prematurely, will only enable the US to control China's financial sector.

With the Joe Biden administration's decision on the Section 301 tariffs on Chinese imports still pending, the US delegation should not regard that as a bargaining chip in its discussions with the Chinese side, as the Chinese economy has adapted to those tariffs over the past about five years. They should also be reminded that US companies and consumers have also borne the brunt of the punitive tariffs from day one.

The challenges confronting the Chinese economy now are mainly caused by some domestic structural issues. For too long, the Chinese economy has relied on the boom of the real estate sector, a low-hanging fruit for all emerging economies in the early stage of their economic development.

If the US really looks forward to helping China address its economic issues, it should put an end to its attempts to sabotage China's endeavors to strive for a higher position in the global value chain. It should discard its zero-sum Cold War mindset and view China's development objectively.

Shambaugh rightly said that it is important to have a "resilient channel" for talks, "especially in areas where we disagree", but until the US side ceases to politicize economic relations with China, the Economic Working Group mechanism will only serve as a venue for the two sides to pay lip service to improving bilateral relations.

That being said, the high hopes that are being pinned on the discussions to stabilize relations between the world's two largest economies are likely to be nothing more than wishful thinking as the US side has shown no inclination to do more than talk for talk's sake.

Cai Meng



## Opinion Line

## Blueprint for IPR cooperation under BRI framework needed

The third Belt and Road High-level Conference on Intellectual Property Rights, held in Beijing last week, which emphasized efforts to promote the development of IPR cooperation, is expected to inject more IPR elements into high-quality cooperation between China and the countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative.

China has till now signed IP cooperation agreements with 57 countries participating in the BRI. Over the past decade, the cumulative number of patent applications and authorizations by Chinese enterprises in these countries and related organizations reached 70,000 and 35,000 respectively, at an average annual growth rate of more than 20 percent.

Yet China still needs to address some

problems, from the lack of practical cooperation projects to the cultivation of IPR talents, trademarks and brands, and the strengthening of service cooperation with patent agencies.

IPR cooperation is closely related to some important areas related to national security such as network telecommunications, navigation and aviation, and highway transportation.

China should take targeted measures to cultivate talents in relevant areas, such as IPR talents with international thinking, advanced professional skills and skilled operational ability, and talents who are familiar with international politics and relations.

China needs to strengthen the use of trademark information resources

through innovative ideas, mechanisms and methods and Chinese enterprises should launch products that are more in line with global market demand, and enhance the commercial value of their trademarks.

China should give full play to their potential, guide them to make rational use of the World Intellectual Property Organization's global service system, and improve their overseas IPR distribution and cooperation capacity.

China should also carry out overseas IPR protection consulting services, provide training and legal consulting services required by enterprises, and strengthen early warning and prevention mechanisms for IPR infringements.

— ECONOMIC DAILY

## 4.96 million reasons to boost rare earth processing

The China Rare Earth Group's breakthrough in mine exploration in Liangshan Yi autonomous prefecture, Sichuan province, where it has stumbled upon an additional 4.96 million tons of rare earth reserves as officially announced on Sept 15, will have a huge impact.

Rare earths is a collective term for 17 elements including scandium, yttrium, and the lanthanide series, all of which play key roles in various industrial fields such as aerospace, specialty materials, metallurgy and energy.

According to data from the United States Geological Survey, China had a reserve of 44 million tons of rare earths, almost twice that of the next highest, Vietnam, which has 22 million tons.

But having a large reserve alone doesn't naturally make one dominate the global market. China is not a leader in the processing of rare earths, namely the ability to turn mined rare earth materials into industrial products. Many developed nations import rare earth minerals from China, make their own products and sell them in the international market.

Which in turn requires China to further sharpen its relevant technologies to secure a leading role in not only the global reserves of rare earths but also their finished products market. Also, since rare earth mining is harmful to the environment, China bears high environmental costs too. However, that

could change as the nation's first comprehensive rare earth regulation, which says domestic rare earth resources should be exploited in a protective manner, comes into effect on Oct 1.

The known rare earth resources in Liangshan, estimated at 2.78 million tons according to an academic conference in 2020, are primarily light rare earths, classified as bastnaesite rare earth deposits, with associated minerals such as fluorite and barite. If the additional 4.96 million tons are similar in composition, which is highly likely, that will be an added reason for China to boost its technology upgrading so as to make better use of its resources.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

## What They Say

## US still failing to fulfil its duty of care to Palestinians

Pagers used by hundreds of members of Hezbollah exploded near-simultaneously on Tuesday in Lebanon and Syria, killing at least nine people and wounding several thousand, officials said. Hezbollah and the Lebanese government blamed Israel for what appeared to be a sophisticated remote-controlled attack.

Israel said on Tuesday that halting Hezbollah's attacks in the country's north to allow residents to return to their homes is now an official war goal, as it considers a wider military operation in Lebanon.

And Israeli air strikes killed 16 people on Monday in the Gaza Strip, including five women and four children. Last week, a UN convoy supporting the polio vaccination campaign in Gaza approved by Israel was forcibly detained for nearly eight hours, during which shots were fired. Also last week, six employees of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East were

killed in an air strike.

Although Washington accuses Israel's military of striking schools, humanitarian workers and civilians in Gaza and warns Tel Aviv against a war with Hezbollah, the United States, which acts as a mediator in Gaza cease-fire talks, has never stopped rushing military and financial assistance to Israel since the conflict with Hamas began on Oct 7.

Gaza's health ministry says more than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed in the territory since then. The conflict has caused vast destruction and displaced about 90 percent of Gaza's population of 2.3 million.

Despite the four resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council related to Gaza, the International Court of Justice orders on provisional measures, and the huge efforts of the UN and other humanitarian agencies, the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip has been constantly worsening, and violations of international law, in particular international humanitarian law, have persisted nonstop.

China strongly condemns such appalling attacks on humanitarian agencies

and personnel, which are unacceptable. The US is obliged to urge Israel to fulfill its obligations under international humanitarian law by putting lives and humanity first, immediately lift the blockade, open all crossings, end the restrictions on humanitarian deliveries, cease and desist from attacking UN and other humanitarian agencies, and provide safe and unimpeded access to the operations of those agencies.

The US needs to shoulder its responsibility and use the significant influence it holds over Israel to push the latter to cease its military operations without delay, as demanded by the UN Security Council resolutions.

As China's deputy permanent representative to the UN, Geng Shuang, said, had the US not stood in the way, the UN Security Council could have adopted a resolution demanding a cease-fire early on after the conflict erupted, and had the US not shielded Israel time and again, multiple resolutions of the UN Security Council would not have been flagrantly rejected and defied.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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## GLOBAL VIEWS

JOSE LUIS CENTELLA GOMEZ

## Common cause

Community with a shared future is guarantee of security as the foundation of social stability and well-being

A few months ago, two highly significant meetings took place in Beijing. The third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, where the deepening of reform policies to advance China's modernization was approved, highlighted how China is deepening its reform policies to continue developing Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, which adapts Marxist theory to China's specific reality. And the Conference



Marking the 70th Anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence showed the world a path toward peacefully resolving international conflicts through negotiation, within the framework of the United Nations' founding principles.

From a Marxist analysis of the current geopolitical situation, it is evident that the theoretical and practical principles stemming from the conclusions of these two meetings are directly interrelated in their strategic perspective. There can be no social, economic and cultural development of nations if a large portion of state resources is dedicated to sustaining a spiral of militarism, rather than being directed toward development aid projects that could eradicate poverty globally and build a future of peace and progress for all humanity in harmony with nature.

For this reason, highlighting certain elements from the conclusions of these two important meetings is essential to advance the development of 21st-century Marxism and adapt it to the reality of other countries that need it. While the path to building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics should not be imitated since it is a specific application of Marxism to China's reality, it does contain ideas and proposals that can be studied and adapted to the diverse and plural realities across the globe.

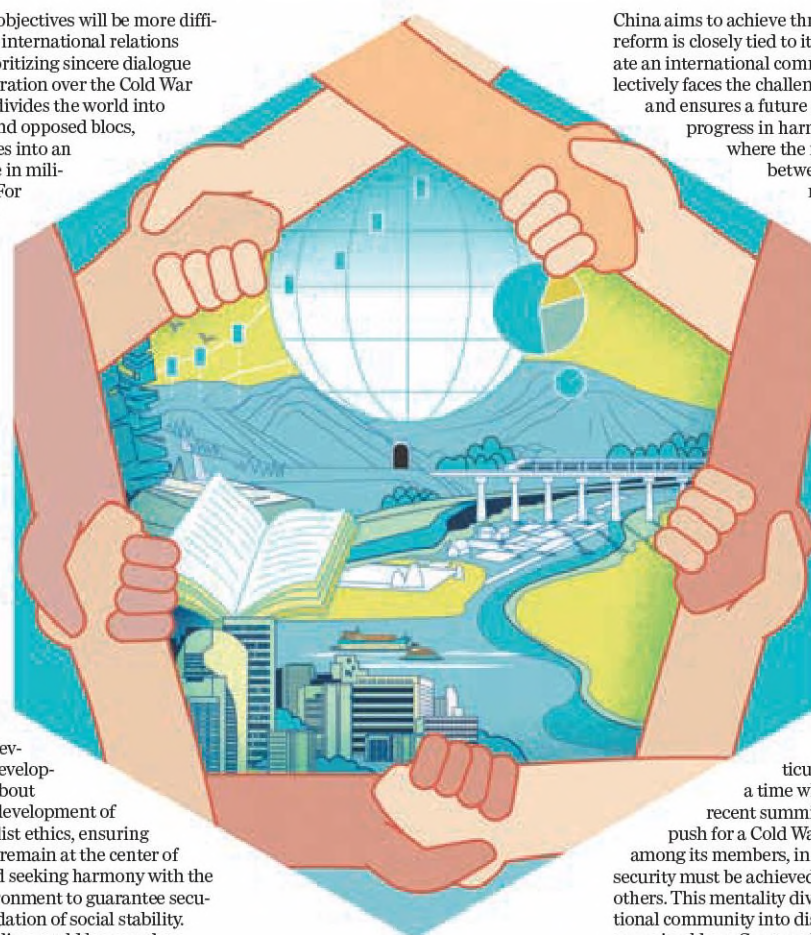
Continuing the reform policies will create the conditions necessary to achieve development goals and improve the quality of life for the Chinese people. However,

reaching these objectives will be more difficult without an international relations framework prioritizing sincere dialogue and loyal cooperation over the Cold War mentality that divides the world into disconnected and opposed blocs, forcing countries into an absurd increase in military spending. For this reason, the comprehensive deepening of reforms is accompanied by an offer to the international community of the basic principles for peaceful coexistence, demonstrating China's international responsibility.

In this era of significant challenges for humanity, it is not only about achieving economic development but also about advancing the development of ideas and socialist ethics, ensuring that the people remain at the center of political life and seeking harmony with the ecological environment to guarantee security as the foundation of social stability.

No reform policy would be complete without recognizing that any modernization project must achieve harmony between humans and nature. This requires promoting measures to continue reducing carbon emissions and pollutants, actively combating climate change, and expanding green spaces to achieve ecological development.

Ultimately, it is about maintaining the



SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

successful pace of reform as an application of 21st-century Marxism. However, this will be more difficult if the importance of international issues is not addressed in an increasingly interconnected global community. The high-level modernization that

China aims to achieve through deepening reform is closely tied to its offer to help create an international community that collectively faces the challenges of humanity and ensures a future of peace and progress in harmony. This is

where the relationship between the Third Plenary Session of the 20th

Central Committee and the 70th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence takes on its full importance, as it demonstrates China's determination to advance toward a community with a shared future for all humanity.

This approach is particularly significant at a time when NATO's recent summit continued to push for a Cold War mentality among its members, in which a nation's security must be achieved at the expense of others. This mentality divides the international community into disconnected and opposing blocs. Conversely, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are based on the need to consolidate mutual respect between states, adhering to the "Golden Rule" of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. This fully reflects the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and aligns with the fundamental interests of all peoples around the world. These principles address critical issues

such as security policy, economics and diplomacy, promoting a just understanding of international law without allowing a hegemonic power to impose its will and interests on other countries. This framework calls for more equitable relations between the North and the South, strengthening South-South cooperation to lift many countries out of underdevelopment and poverty.

In an international community that includes multiple cultures, civilizations, religions, and different economic and social systems, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence assert that no system or civilization can impose itself on others by force, and that all civilizations of the world have positive elements to learn from. Overcoming the politics of blocs and spheres of influence is the only way to help resolve the tensions and conflicts that affect dozens of peoples worldwide.

In this sense, the shared security model advocated by China aims to end the division of the world into a rich North that exploits a poor South, which remains dependent on the North. This model promotes more equitable relations between the North and South, and strengthens South-South cooperation to lift many countries out of underdevelopment and poverty. It is based on the principle that peaceful coexistence among all peoples on the planet is impossible without addressing poverty in countries of origin because a more prosperous world is a safer world.

President Xi Jinping's proposal to move toward a community with a shared future for all humanity, based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, is accompanied by the Belt and Road Initiative, along with the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative. These represent the most extensive and profound cooperation proposals for development ever known in history.

The author is president of the Communist Party of Spain. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

HASAN TARIQUE CHOWDHURY

## Change of ways

The rise of Asia is leading to a multipolar world and shared development

It may be rapid, immediate or slow, but change is inevitable. Changes in Asia in terms of politics and economics are multi-dimensional. It gives the Asian political landscape a unique character. The modern thought of politics, efficient economic theory, advanced social science and forward-looking science and technology are the real strengths of Asia.



In recent years, the world has been confronted with a series of serious crises and challenges, including the Ukraine crisis, United States-China tensions, the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh and Myanmar, the turmoil in Pakistani politics, and the Afghan crisis.

Each of these changes has had a significant economic and political impact on Asia, and on the whole world as well. In October 2022, US President Joe Biden took a major step to try and constrain China's rise by denying it access to the advanced semiconductor chips essential for the development of new technology such as artificial intelligence. However, the administration's tendency to act unilaterally, its lackluster trade initiatives, and its embrace of an industrial policy that could steal jobs from those same friends and allies, have undercut its efforts. In mid-November 2023, President Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping met on the sidelines of the G20 summit. They agreed to work to reduce mutual tensions and pledged cooperation in areas such as climate change and public health. Nonetheless, mutual suspicion and acrimony are likely to dominate the relationship for years to come. If we analyze the above-mentioned statement of the US government, we will find the root cause of the ongoing challenges to the "Rise of Asia". Instead of embracing the concept of shared development as strongly promoted by President Xi, the US has preferred to take a controversial approach toward China and other major Asian powers. This approach is neither peace-loving nor democratic and not in line with a responsible diplomatic manner. The peace-loving citizens of the US will not wel-

come the approach that is clearly directed at a hegemonic world order. Rather the global community requires a world of mutual cooperation.

Once the narrative of development was subject to the prescription of a bipolar world order. Now the global scenario has been transformed to a complex and multidimensional level. President Xi in his keynote address at the opening ceremony of the Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Coop-

eration in Beijing on Sept 5, rightly said: "Modernization is an inalienable right of all countries." In his speech, he pointed out that the wave of modernization underway must be just and equitable and put people first. It must be open and win-win, and underpinned by peace and security. It must also be eco-friendly and featuring diversity and inclusiveness. These issues need to be addressed strongly in all aspects of regional and global development, particularly in the



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

development paradigm of the Global South.

As Harvard University Professor Stephen M. Walt wrote in Foreign Policy Journal on March 7, 2023, "the Biden administration is striving for a unipolar order that no longer exists". Those who promote a unipolar world order have failed to submit any reasonable arguments why there should not be a multipolar world. Not surprisingly, Russian and Chinese leaders have long expressed a desire for a more multipolar

order, as have the leaders of emerging powers such as India and Brazil. More interestingly, so have important US allies. Former German chancellor Gerhard Schroder warned of the "undeniable danger" of US unilateralism, and former French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine once declared, "the entire foreign policy of France ... is aimed at making the world of tomorrow composed of several poles, not just one".

We can understand that this realization has come from the dire consequences of Western capitalism and its negative prospects. That is why the idea introduced by President Xi for global modernization necessarily focuses on a multipolar world order, featuring the theory of diversity and inclusiveness as set out in the Global Civilization Initiative. Thousands of years of experience of human civilization show that only by enhancing people-to-people and cultural exchanges among various parts of the world, and championing mutual respect, inclusiveness and the peaceful coexistence of different civilizations can more fruitful outcomes under the Global Civilization Initiative be achieved. Asia has proved its capacity to lead the implementation of this initiative.

Our era and our history are at a very critical juncture. Any mistakes as to understanding the demands of the era may lead to unbearable consequences. I come from a very beautiful country with the largest sea beach in the world and it has extraordinary friendship with the Chinese people. Presently, China is a major development partner of Bangladesh. Our people want that this process has to be continued without hesitation. We can confidently say that thousand years of our history has proved that mutual respect, inclusiveness and peaceful coexistence of different civilizations can bring about global prosperity and peace.

The author is a practicing lawyer at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

## Patent protection crucial to Novonesis' innovation

By HAO NAN  
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Considering intellectual property rights as a foundational element of the company, Novonesis has continuously invested in research and development while maintaining technological advancement via patent and trademark protections.

"We have established processes to ensure that all the innovations we invest in are protected by relevant patents, and that trademarks are applied in the appropriate markets," said Iben Haasum, vice-president of IP and licensing at Novonesis, a leading bio-solution provider headquartered in Denmark.

She made the remarks during an interview at the 13th China Intellectual Property Annual Conference, which concluded last week in Beijing.

"We see patents and other IP rights as essential tools to strengthen our global competitiveness and to maintain our aspirations and passion for innovation," Haasum added.

Since initiating patent filings in 1985, Novonesis has amassed about 10,000 invention patents and some 8,000 trademarks globally. Last year, it filed 173 patent applications with the European Patent Office, the highest number among Danish companies in 2023.

In China, the company currently holds about 2,200 patents and 800 trademarks in the biotech sector.

With in-house patent and trademark attorneys in China and other countries, Novonesis stays abreast of changes in laws and regulations, integrating these changes into its innovation and IP protection strategies. For example, China's latest amendment to the Patent Law, adopted in 2020 and effective from 2021, has provided clearer guidance on patent protection.

"With the amended laws and regulations, we can enforce our patent rights and defend our business more effectively," Haasum noted.

However, like many companies facing various difficulties in securing patents, a primary challenge of Novonesis now lies in obtaining a broader protection

scope for its innovations in China.

Compared to other large jurisdictions like the United States and Europe, China applies a narrower protection scope for some biotech patents, which will potentially undermine the effectiveness of patent rights, and lead to easier infringements and insufficient safeguarding of innovations.

"When you develop a molecule, it is very easy for an infringer to tweak it slightly and then basically use your entire innovation to sell what we consider a copycat product," Haasum said, adding that she looks forward to improvements in the guidelines and practices of the examination for granting biotech patents in China.

Despite the challenge, Haasum remains optimistic that China's standards for biotech patent protection will align more closely with global trends, resulting in stronger IP protection and fostering a fairer competitive environment for innovators. "The optimism is driven by the fast and remarkable innovations in the biotech sector which is a new quality productive force for China's economy. Importantly, we have also observed growing respect and protection of IP rights by Chinese courts and IP authorities," she added.

For biotech startups, Haasum suggests developing a long-term patent protection strategy and building a robust patent portfolio from the very beginning.

Given that IP protection demands significant investment of both manpower and financial resources, startups should prioritize which innovations to protect and carefully choose the geographic regions for filing patents to maximize business impact.

"It's not necessary to file as many patents as you can, but high-quality patents and those that bring the most value and protection to your business are more important," she said.

Additionally, Haasum advises biotech startups to check third-party IP rights at the beginning of a project, identify potential risks, and prepare mitigation plans. Often, these mitigation plans can lead to new innovations that feed and strengthen their patent portfolio.



A panel discussion is held during the annual conference in Beijing. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## CIPAC key venue for international dialogue

Annual intellectual property conference discusses a wide range of topical issues

By YUAN SHENGGAO

To develop new quality productive forces, it is necessary to give full play to the key role of technological innovation in improving productivity and continuously strengthening intellectual property protection, said a senior official on Friday.

Shen Changyu, head of the China National Intellectual Property Administration, made the remarks at the opening of the 13th China Intellectual Property Annual Conference in Beijing.

The two-day event attracted heavyweight guests from home and abroad to exchange insights into topical issues in the sphere of IP. They included government officials and representatives from international organizations, academia and the business community.

Shen called for making full use of IP to better incentivize high-level innovation and ramp up innovation in industries, development models and mechanisms so as to foster momentum to empower new quality productive forces.

Daren Tang, director general of the World Intellectual Property Organization, said the global IP landscape is undergoing a profound shift, with the engines of IP growth increasingly diverse. "China is driving this transformation, leading the world in patent, trademark and design filings."

"This forum provides an opportunity for a rich, multistakeholder conversation on the development of the Chinese and global IP ecosystem, and I am certain that the

outcomes of the discussions here will help WIPO and its members build a vibrant, effective and inclusive global IP ecosystem," he added.

Cambodia's Secretary of State of the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology and Innovation, Phork Sovanrith, also appreciated the annual conference's role in promoting technology transfer and industrial development and assisting in international cooperation in innovation and IP.

Based on a memorandum of understanding signed by the CNIPA and Cambodia's MISTI, Cambodia recognizes patents granted in China.

The bilateral cooperation, which is mutually beneficial and across the board, is the continuation of the long-lasting friendship between the two countries, Phork noted.

Phork said he has faith in the prospects of CNIPA-MISTI cooperation, which is conducive to IP protection and technology transfer and commercialization in both countries.

CEO of the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property, Abdulaziz Mohammed A Alswailen, stressed the necessity of using emerging technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence to increase IP administrators' work efficiency and better address the growing complexity of the digital era, by the advent of rapid technology progress.

To promote cooperation against the backdrop of the global digital economy, IP offices need to transform themselves and change their

work style to adapt to the demand of the era, he said.

Huang Hanquan, dean of the Chinese Academy of Macroeconomic Research, suggested scaling up commercialization and industrialization of technological innovation achievements, which helps transform traditional sectors, foster and strengthen emerging industries, and stay ahead of the curve when it comes to developing future industries. That will help to build a modern industrial system and promote the creation of new quality productive forces, he added.

Song Liuping, senior vice-president and chief legal officer of Huawei Technologies and member of the company's supervisory board, suggested looking into the IP system from a global perspective.

The jurisdiction concerning IP, as well as related judgements and verdicts, constitutes a part of the global rules on IP. In this regard, China as the country that boasts the largest trade volume, the second-largest GDP and the largest manufacturing industry worldwide could make a greater contribution, Song said.

Compared with other countries, China has a salient feature in its IP administration. At national, provincial, city and county levels, there are government departments dedicated to IP issues and they are authorized by law to conduct administrative mediation and give rulings.

If the administrative rulings, mediation and protection and judicial protection can work in tandem, it will result in a synergy that can yield high efficiency and swift responses and could make China a key international hub for IP dispute resolution, he noted.

## Executive expects more balance in remedies

By YUAN SHENGGAO

At the recent 13th China Intellectual Property Annual Conference in Beijing, Zhou Bing, vice-president of corporate affairs and general manager in China at Intel Corporation, called for creating a more balanced patent protection system.

In the era of artificial intelligence, creation of a more balanced patent protection system that takes the interests of various stakeholders into consideration is key to ensuring IP's role in spurring the growth of new quality productive forces, Zhou said.

As the entire patent system is a complex issue, he focused his speech on legal remedies — injunctions and damages — at the main session of the 2024 CIPAC on Friday.

He cited AI chips as an example. A single chip may involve some 100,000 patents, held by more than 1,000 patentees and combined with applications from various industries, which can create more complex circumstances for patent protection.

In this situation, a defendant in a patent dispute could be a rightful owner to another irrelevant patent, and a product entangled in a patent case might incorporate non-infringing patents.

"In such cases, it is important to consider a more balanced system," Zhou said. "When it comes to legal remedy options, not only the interests of patent holders need to be considered, but also those of other stakeholders should be taken into account, such as the defendants involved in the case, patent implementers, the industry behind them, and the broader public."

And the technological contribution to the overall value of the product caught up with the patent case also needs to be factored into the decision of legal remedies, he added.

"Facing the increasing complexity of patented products, we must be particularly cautious when deciding on whether to use injunctions," he noted.

Still taking the semiconductor industry as an example, Zhou said if an injunction is imposed on the semiconductor sector, that will affect not only the chip industry but also downstream sectors such as personal computers and servers, and even more significantly, the effect will reach the digital economy industry it supports.

Moving up the chain, production, design, and research and development related to chips will all be affected, he noted.

Granting an injunction is effective in the case where the patented technology in issue has never been authorized, or it is pivotal to the related product, contributing the lion's share to the product value, Zhou asserted.

However, in contrast, injunctions could lead to opposite results in the following circumstances, he cautioned.

One is that the disputed patent only contributes slightly to the product value. In that case, it needs further consideration in deciding on the use of an injunction that could have substantial impact on socioeconomic development.

The other case that calls for reconsideration of the use of an injunction is that the patentee does not act as the patent implementer, but rather uses the patent in issue as a tool to elbow competitors out of market.

"In such cases, if our remedial system is not adjusted, we may run the risk of losing the primary purpose of the patent system to protect competition and innovation," Zhou said.

It is the same case with damages in an IP case, where the principle of proportionality also needs to be taken into consideration, he added. "That will help to ensure that our judicial practice works at its best, protecting the legitimate rights of patentees while encouraging development, competition and technological innovations."

"Whether issuing an injunction or awarding damages, judges hold a salient position in judicial procedures," he said.

"We expect them to be given greater discretionary powers, allowing the principles of balance and proportionality to be fully reflected in judicial practice."



Iben Haasum, vice-president of IP and licensing at Novonesis, delivers a speech at the conference. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## Guangdong Power Grid charged up by IP drive

By HAO NAN

Since intellectual property rights are a key element in driving new quality productive forces, Guangdong Power Grid, a wholly-owned subsidiary of China Southern Power Grid, has continuously enhanced its IP creation, utilization, protection and management levels.

The initiative has significantly increased the company's capabilities in terms of innovation, IP management and technological commercialization.

At the just concluded 13th China Intellectual Property Annual Conference, Guangdong Power Grid showcased a series of core patented technologies and major achievements.

One of them was the "method for wind resistance evaluation of power transmission towers and related devices", a national invention patent used to formulate reinforcement schemes for power transmission lines.

The technology can identify which towers fall to meet the current wind resistance standards, assess whether reinforcing existing towers can meet the current standards, and pinpoint the weak areas where towers need reinforcement, according to the company.

Another major achievement showcased at the conference was the "method and devices for online maintenance of battery packs". This

patented technology has been applied in 22 substations in 14 regions including the cities of Shaoguan and Shenzhen in Guangdong, Anshun in Guizhou, Baoshan and Qujing in Yunnan, and Lishui in Zhejiang.

Technological innovation relies on the support of talents. Guangdong Power Grid currently has around 92,000 employees, including 242 with doctoral degrees, 6,496 with master's degrees, and 10 experts enjoying special allowances from the State Council.

Also, the company has set up postdoctoral research workstations, and boasts two provincial-level key laboratories, five engineering technology research centers, and two national energy research and innovation platforms.

Supported by these factors, it possesses strong sci-tech innovation and independent research and development capabilities in multiple business areas, such as power grid operation, information communication, testing, and comprehensive energy.

The company is also at the forefront nationwide in the development of key technologies. They include complex large power grid control, superconducting power applications, flexible direct current transmission and power robots.

Moreover, it attaches great importance to building an innovation model centered around invention



Guangdong Power Grid showcases its patented technologies at the intellectual property conference in Beijing. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

patents. In the past five years, the company has filed nearly 20,000 invention patent applications.

By the end of August, the company had 22,005 valid patents, including 11,076 invention patents, ranking it first in the number of valid invention patents among provincial-level power grid companies nationwide.

The company also proactively files patent applications overseas, with 18 patents authorized in the United States, Japan and Europe.

By following the Special Action Plan for Transformation and Application of Patents (2023-25), Guangdong Power Grid has made efforts

to convert its patent advantages into a powerful driving force for innovation development.

The company has collaborated with various major innovative platforms, including leading enterprises and high-end research institutions, to jointly build a patent pool. It has provided 84 patents for the pool.

Another effort made by the company is to continuously expand the scope of IP cooperation.

Since the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area clearly proposes to build an international center for scientific and

technological innovation, the company has helped several counterparts in the Bay Area to enhance sci-tech innovation, strengthen IP creation, protection and application, and build channels for sharing resources and exchanging experiences, in a bid to support the high-quality development of the Greater Bay Area.

Additionally, Guangdong Power Grid has developed a patent asset analysis system and an IP management system to strengthen support by digital platforms.

The analysis system is able to analyze some 11 million pieces of patent data in the electricity and related fields, accurately guiding innovative resource allocation toward national and industry development priorities, and preventing investment waste in duplicate or redundant research, according to the company.

Guangdong Power Grid is one of the largest provincial-level power grid companies in China. It is responsible for investing in, constructing and managing the power grids of 20 prefecture-level cities in Guangdong, and provides power supply services to Hong Kong and Macao.

As of this year, the company has operated safely and stably for more than 20 years, and ranked first in the provincial government's public service evaluation for 15 consecutive years.

## SPORTS

## All's Wells that ends well



New York Yankees catcher Austin Wells hits a 6th-inning, three-run double against the Seattle Mariners at T-Mobile Park in Seattle, Washington, on Tuesday. The game also saw Juan Soto hit his 200th career home run and Aaron Judge drive in four runs for an 11-2 win. USA TODAY SPORTS VIA REUTERS

## MOTOR SPORTS

## Verstappen promises Red Bull rally, as McLaren leads charge to Singapore

SINGAPORE — Max Verstappen declared “the fight is not over”, as Red Bull heads to Singapore this week having been knocked off the top of the constructors’ world championship for the first time in two-and-a-half years.

McLaren leapt into a 20-point lead after Oscar Piastri’s masterful victory at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix was compounded by Sergio Perez’s late tangle with Carlos Sainz that ended with both in the wall.

McLaren’s Lando Norris, who carved his way to fourth place after starting 15th on the grid, is hunting down the Dutchman Verstappen at the top of the drivers’ standings.

The triple world champion’s lead has been reduced to 59 points with seven grands prix and three sprints to go, leaving a maximum of 207 points up for grabs.

Verstappen won seven of the first 10 races this season, but he has not triumphed in the last seven as McLaren, Ferrari and Mercedes have all taken race wins.

Red Bull’s influential advisor Helmut Marko said after Baku that it has no chance of retaining the constructors’ championship, but Verstappen has not conceded yet.

“We are going to work together as a team and the fight is not over,” declared Verstappen after coming fifth.

“You win or lose as a team and we won’t give up. It is as simple as that.”

But history suggests that Verstappen’s fortunes are unlikely to

see an uptick around the unpredictable Marina Bay Circuit this weekend.

Red Bull has consistently struggled under the lights in Singapore.

It was the only race Red Bull failed to win last year, Ferrari’s Sainz taking the checkered flag to deny Verstappen a record-extending 11th consecutive GP victory. Norris was second.

Verstappen has never won on the tight city-center street circuit, where tropical storms, intense humidity, concrete barriers, safety cars and red flags all add to the uncertainty.

Street circuit specialist Perez did win in Singapore in 2022, but that was Red Bull’s only victory there since Sebastian Vettel in 2013.

## McLaren milestone

After a strong start to the campaign, Red Bull is on the back foot.

“We have lost out on some significant points in the championship,” team principal Christian Horner said after its messy Azerbaijan outing.

“However, we will brush ourselves down and fight back hard.”

McLaren, by contrast, is in buoyant mood, as it targets a first team world title since 1998.

“First in the constructors’ championship is an important milestone in our journey,” said team principal Andrea Stella.

“However, the team remains clearly focused on the task ahead.

We quickly turn our attention to Singapore.”

The high downforce track in Singapore has traditionally been of benefit to Mercedes.

“We’ve also got lots of data to work through ahead of Singapore,” said Lewis Hamilton, trying to take some positives from a ninth-place finish in Baku after an engine change forced him to start from the pit lane.

“We’ve got some upgrades coming before the end of the year, so hopefully we can make a step closer to those at the front soon.”

Ferrari’s Charles Leclerc won at Monza, but he could not make it two in a row after starting from pole position for the fourth year in a row at Baku and, as on the three previous occasions, failed to convert it into a victory.

“For sure we have a bit of frustration because we had the space and pace to win this weekend,” lamented Ferrari chief Fred Vasseur.

In the end, Leclerc did well to hang on to second after his hard tyres degraded badly behind Piastri in the second half of the race and then saw teammate Sainz’s late crash in his mirrors.

“It wasn’t the best day for our team,” said Leclerc, who is only 19 points behind Norris and still firmly in the hunt for the drivers’ title.

“But, we now head to Singapore and will come back stronger.”

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

## OLYMPICS

## Athletics legend Coe to vie with six rivals for IOC presidency

Election set to take place in Athens next March

LAUSANNE — World Athletics chief Sebastian Coe is the most high-profile of the seven candidates to have declared on Monday their bid to succeed International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach.

Coe will face stiff opposition from, amongst others, Kirsty Coventry, bidding to become the first woman and African to head the IOC, and cycling boss David Lappartient.

The charismatic Briton, a two-time Olympic 1,500m champion, also faces challenges in the rules laid down last week by the IOC Ethics Commission.

Coe turns 68 on Sept 29, and, although there is room for maneuver to raise the retirement age of IOC members and presidents to 74, he will be older than that come the end of an eight-year mandate.

The election will be held at the IOC Session in Athens, which runs from March 18-21 next year.

Bach, 70, is standing down after serving 12 years. The German announced at the end of the Paris Games that he would not be seeking another term.

The other four candidates include two from Asia — another continent never to have had an IOC president — Jordan’s Prince Feisal Al Hussein and Japanese gymnastics chief Morinari Watanabe.

Juan Antonio Samaranch Jr, whose father was IOC president from 1980-2001 and transformed it into a commercial powerhouse, and a surprise entrant, ski federation president Johan Eliasch, round up the candidates.

Under the election rules Coe, Eliasch, Lappartient and Watanabe will all have to resign as heads of their respective federations and seek re-election as individual members at the Athens Session.

First up for the septet is presenting their respective programs to the IOC members at the turn of the year.

“The candidates will present their programs, in camera, to the full IOC membership on the occasion of a meeting to be held in Lausanne (Switzerland) in January 2025,” read a short IOC statement unveiling the candidates.

There will be a transition period post election — not something Bach enjoyed when he succeeded Jacques Rogge in 2013 — with the new president and his team assuming control in June.

Bach has had a bumpy ride over



International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach (left) and World Athletics president Sebastian Coe at the 2024 Paris Olympics on Aug 11. REUTERS

“He leaves big shoes to fill and I am not sure everyone fully understands the true complexity of the job. Bach has made it look all too easy. It is not — and bringing 206 countries (and regions) together and staging the world’s largest event is not simple.”

Michael Payne, IOC’s former head of marketing

the course of his tenure, with Russia causing him the most problems.

It is somewhat of an irony, given that it was Russian President Vladimir Putin who was the first to phone and congratulate the 1976 Olympic gold medal-winning fencer on his election in Buenos Aires in 2013.

First, there was the doping scandal, which cast a dark shadow over the Sochi Winter Games in 2014, and then Russia’s conflict with Ukraine in 2022.

On both occasions, Coe took a stronger stand over banning Russians than Bach and the IOC.

This independent streak did not endear him to Bach.

## ‘Big shoes’

Bach was seen by some to have handled Russia well, though others

argued his hand was forced to impose strict eligibility conditions on those Russian and Belarusian athletes performing in Paris.

Away from Russia, he showed a steady hand when COVID-19 swept the globe, forcing the postponement, but not the cancellation, of the Tokyo Games.

Though they took place a year later in 2021, and the majority of events, exceptions being track cycling and road races, were without spectators due to COVID restrictions, they were judged to have been a success, just for taking place.

Bach will not depart to universal acclaim, but the IOC’s former head of marketing Michael Payne believes he has done an outstanding job.

“Thomas Bach has been an incredibly successful president, and leaves the IOC in far stronger shape than when he took over in 2013,” the 66-year-old Irishman told reporters.

Payne, who in nearly two decades at the IOC was widely credited with transforming its brand and finances through sponsorship, said his successor faces some mighty challenges.

“He leaves big shoes to fill and I am not sure everyone fully understands the true complexity of the job,” said Payne.

“Bach has made it look all too easy. It is not — and bringing 206 countries (and regions) together and staging the world’s largest event is not simple.

“The future is going to be even more complex — an increasing politicization of sport, a rapidly changing business and broadcast environment, AI and new technology.

“The challenges on the horizon are not straightforward!”

AFP

## GOLF

## Hall of Famer O’Meara chooses Pebble Beach to call it quits

Mark O’Meara is ready to retire, and he has picked the ideal spot — Pebble Beach — to do it.

O’Meara won the California State Amateur in 1979, the first of his six titles over three decades at Pebble Beach. Five of those were the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am, the last one in 1997, when, at age 40, he held off Tiger Woods and David Duval.

O’Meara, 67, is ending his career this week at the Pure Insurance Championship, held at Pebble Beach and Spyglass, a unique PGA Tour Champions event that pairs pros with kids from The First Tee, a youth development program.

O’Meara, inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 2015 at a ceremony at St Andrews, ends his career with 16 wins on the PGA Tour, three on the European tour, two on the Japan Golf Tour, one on the PGA Tour of Australasia and the 1994 Argentina Open.

He won on every continent golf is played except Africa, although he did partner with Nick Price of Zimbabwe to win the Liberty Mutual

Insurance Legends of Golf, one of his three PGA Tour Champions titles.

Pebble Beach was the obvious choice when deciding to walk away from a career that started there with that 8-and-7 win over Lennie Clements in 1979.

O’Meara also won the US Amateur that year, and his two biggest wins were the Masters and British Open in 1998, making him the oldest player to win two majors in the same year.

His favorite Pebble Beach moment was winning in 1990 with his father.

“I flew him and mom out and then I won the tournament playing alongside my dad,” O’Meara said. “I put that right at the top of the list of great things, winning at Augusta with a putt on the final hole, winning the US Amateur. But, to play with my father and coming up the last hole, the 18th hole at Pebble, you can’t do better than that.”

Scheffler tops money list  
Scottie Scheffler had such a banner year, he even topped the highest earner from Saudi-funded LIV Golf.



Mark O’Meara

Jon Rahm cashed in with two late victories and the season points title worth an \$18 million bonus. That pushed his total to \$34,754,821 in just 13 starts.

Scheffler, with his \$25 million bonus for winning the FedEx Cup and \$8 million bonus from the Comcast Business Top 10, earned \$62,228,357 in 19 starts, while winning seven times on the PGA Tour (that doesn’t include his gold medal

from the Olympics and a \$37,500 payoff from the US Olympic and Paralympics Committee).

Of course, Scheffler didn’t get a signing bonus, either.

The LIV Golf League ended the individual portion of its season with five players earning at least \$10 million. Joaquin Niemann was second with just under \$24.4 million, followed by Sergio Garcia (\$17 million), Tyrrell Hatton (\$11.6 million)

and Brooks Koepka in fifth at just under \$11.6 million.

Talor Gooch leads the LIV Golf career money list with \$51,856,381 in three seasons, narrowly ahead of Dustin Johnson at \$51,502,981.

## Missing the big picture

Shane Lowry finally made it back to Royal Portrush for the first time since he won the British Open in 2019. But, he left without seeing the enormous mural of him holding the claret jug painted on the side of a large building.

The mural was unveiled in July to mark a year until the Open returns to Royal Portrush next year.

It’s hard to miss — unless someone is in a hurry.

“I’ll be completely honest, we left Portrush, and we were in such a rush leaving, we totally forgot about going in to see it,” Lowry said last week at the Irish Open. “We were 10 miles down the road, and we forgot to get a picture. I’ve been sent a lot of pictures. It is pretty cool what they did there.”

## Ryder Cup tickets

The Ryder Cup opened early registration to be randomly selected to buy tickets to the September 2025 matches at Bethpage Black.

Tickets for practice rounds on Tuesday and Wednesday, including food and non-alcoholic beverages, are \$255.

They go up to \$424 for Thursday, because it includes a Junior Ryder Cup exhibition, celebrity matches and the opening ceremony.

For the three competition days, tickets are priced around \$750.

The US Open has only offered weekly tickets so far for next year’s tournament at Oakmont.

Those weekly ground passes (good for Monday through Sunday) are going for \$882 including taxes and fees.

A four-day badge to tournament days at the Masters last year was \$450, daily tickets for tournament rounds were \$140 and practice days were \$100.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

## SPORTS

## SOCCER

## Kane fires four in 9-goal rout of Zagreb

In a night of records, one of Champions League's highest scoring games sees Bayern striker eclipse Rooney's European tally

MUNICH — Harry Kane broke Wayne Rooney's record for the most Champions League goals by an English player, finding the net four times in Bayern Munich's rout of Dinamo Zagreb on Tuesday.

It was one of several records broken in what proved to be an emphatic start to European competition for new coach Vincent Kompany, as Bayern thrashed Dinamo Zagreb 9-2 in one of the highest-scoring games in Champions League history.

"Amazing game, a bit of a crazy game for sure," Kane told broadcaster DAZN. "To score all those goals in the end was a great night."

Kane took his tally to 33 in the competition by scoring in the 19th, 53rd, 73rd and 78th minutes — three of the goals were penalties — to surpass Rooney's record of 30.

"I practice my penalties, I have a good routine, but to be honest, I didn't really know what to do for the third one, but thankfully I was able to put it away," Kane said.

"It's the first time I've scored three (penalties) in a game. That doesn't happen at all really."

Kane opened the scoring from the penalty spot to give Bayern the lead over the Croatian club after his teammate Aleksandar Pavlovic was fouled by Ronael Pierre-Gabriel.

That drew Kane level with Rooney's record of 30, and he scored his 31st on a rebound after goalkeeper Ivan Nevistic parried Joshua Kimmich's shot in the 57th.

Kane scored two more from the penalty spot to extend his record.

Dinamo Zagreb enjoyed a small rally just after the turnaround, with Croatia center forward Bruno Petkovic scoring in the 48th minute, quickly followed by another from Takuya Ogiwara two minutes later.

Kane said Bayern "got away with" its second-half lapse but "against the top opposition we can get punished for that, so we need to sort that out."

Bayern boss Kompany toasted a record-breaking win on his debut as a Champions League coach.

"I'm just happy for the lads. They



Harry Kane celebrates scoring Bayern Munich's fourth goal with Alphonso Davies during a 9-2 Champions League win against Dinamo Zagreb at Allianz Arena in Munich, Germany, on Tuesday. Kane netted four times to reach 33 Champions League goals, eclipsing Wayne Rooney's record for the most by an English player. REUTERS

scored the goals, I didn't score any," a smiling Kompany told DAZN.

The former Manchester City captain praised his side's mentality, saying: "We conceded two goals, but we stayed calm. It's not ideal — I know already what happened and how we need to work on it."

"We need to have more control, but that will come."

The six-time Champions League winner has won every one of its past 20 opening matches in the competition dating back to 2002-03.

The score is one goal better than Bayern's record 8-2 win over Barcelona in the quarterfinals of the competition in 2020.

The big win brought more than bragging rights for the German giant, with goal difference likely to be even more important under the new Champions League single league format.

Four other Bayern players scored in the emphatic win, including two goals for new signing Michael Olise on his Champions League debut

after signing from Crystal Palace.

Leon Goretzka's header in stoppage time made Bayern the first team to score nine goals in the Champions League era. Some teams, including Bayern, achieved that feat in the old European Cup. It was the tournament's highest-scoring game in terms of total goals since Borussia Dortmund beat Legia Warsaw 8-4 in 2016, according to UEFA.

The 31-year-old Kane has scored 12 Champions League goals since

moving to Bayern a year ago, and scored 21 before that for his former club Tottenham Hotspur.

Kane now has 53 goals in 50 games in all competitions since moving to Bayern.

He has scored nine goals in his last three games for club and country, including two for England against Finland in his 100th international game and a hat-trick on Saturday for Bayern against Holstein Kiel in the Bundesliga.

Kane and Kylian Mbappe were

joint top scorers in last season's Champions League with eight goals apiece.

Another record was broken when Thomas Muller came off the bench to play his 152nd Champions League game for Bayern. It's the most for a player for one club, breaking a tie with former Barcelona player Xavi Hernandez. Muller has made the joint fourth-most appearances in the competition of any player.

AGENCIES

## Mbappe scores on Champions League debut for Madrid

MADRID — Kylian Mbappe scored on his first Champions League appearance for Real Madrid, as the current titleholder started its trophy defense with a 3-1 win over Stuttgart on Tuesday.

Antonio Rudiger headed home in the 83rd minute to restore the lead for the record 15-time champion, after Deniz Undav neutralized Mbappe's opener just seconds into the second half.

Endrick, making his Champions League debut, wrapped up Madrid's win with a low drive in stoppage time.

Stuttgart had the better of an entertaining opening period, but Carlo Ancelotti's team has a habit of grinding out victories when backed against the wall, and it took the three points despite the visitors' impressive effort.

"We suffered at the start because we lost a lot of duels. The important thing was to win and we won, so everything's good," said Madrid coach Ancelotti.

"You always have to fight at the start of the season, when you aren't at your best."

Mbappe reached five goals for the season in seven appearances across all competitions, opening the scoring when he raced into space at the start of the second half.

"I know I can do more, each game I feel better and now I'm scoring goals, and I'm happy here," Mbappe told Movistar.

"(The game was) hard, but it's the Champions League — it's always difficult, but we won at home, we won the first game," he continued.

"What we know is that the Champions League has changed, and it's important to win quickly to see if we can qualify quickly or not."

With Eder Militao not fit enough to start, Ancelotti selected fullback Dani Carvajal in central defense, while Jude Bellingham and Aurelien Tchouameni returned from injury to play in midfield.

Madrid has lacked a certain balance after stalwart Toni Kroos retired in the summer, and the game lurched from end to end under the Santiago Bernabeu lights.

Bundesliga side Stuttgart had more of the ball and the most dan-



Kylian Mbappe celebrates scoring Real Madrid's first goal in a Champions League match against Stuttgart at the Santiago Bernabeu in Madrid, on Tuesday. REUTERS

gerous chances in the first half, with Enzo Millot heavily involved.

The French midfielder dragged an early shot wide and forced Thibaut Courtois to tip over his dangerous effort from range — the best of a handful of saves by the Belgian.

At the other end, Mbappe had two shots saved by Alexander Nubel as he sought his first Champions League goal for Madrid, while Rodrygo had a shot narrowly deflected over.

Madrid was awarded a penalty when Maximilian Mittelstadt

appeared to catch Rudiger with a clumsy swipe, but the referee canceled the decision after a VAR referral showed no contact was made.

Courtois thwarted Angelo Stiller, and Undav hit the crossbar for Stuttgart, but all the effort was for naught, as it came crashing down to earth for Stuttgart at the start of the second half.

## Second-half rally

Just 21 seconds after the interval Mbappe found the net, teed up unselfishly by Rodrygo. It was blink-and-you'll-miss-it — and many did, still on their way back to their seats from the Bernabeu bars.

The former Paris Saint-Germain striker was not able to win the club game's biggest prize while playing in France, and his desire to lift the trophy matches Madrid's obsession with it.

Stuttgart did not get the memo, and after Vinicius Jr crashed an effort against the crossbar, the German side leveled.

Jamie Leweling came close with a flurry of attempts, before hooking a

corner back into the danger area for Undav to head past Courtois.

Ancelotti sent 18-year-old Brazil striker Endrick on for the final 10 minutes, hunting a winner to get the holder's trophy defense off to the perfect start.

The goal arrived swiftly, but not from Madrid's galaxy of attacking stars. Instead, it was center-back Rudiger who nodded home from Luka Modric's corner in the 83rd minute.

Vinicius missed a golden chance to seal Madrid's win but his compatriot Endrick made no mistake with his only opportunity, drilling home from the edge of the box at the death.

The forward opted not to pass to his more experienced teammates, and took his shot early, catching out goalkeeper Nubel.

"He's a kid with a lot of quality and he showed it," added Courtois.

"Obviously he showed personality by not passing to Vini or Kylian and shooting himself"

AFP

## Rashford bags brace as Barnsley gets battered 7-0

LONDON — Manchester United crushed Barnsley 7-0 in the League Cup third round on Tuesday, as troubled winger Antony scored his first goal of the season and Marcus Rashford struck twice to extend his revival.

While United ran riot, Fulham made unwanted history as the Premier League club was beaten by second-tier Preston 16-15 on penalties in the tournament's longest ever shootout.

Languishing in 10th place in the Premier League after two defeats in its first four games, United was never in danger of suffering an upset from its third-tier opponents at Old Trafford.

Rashford, Antony and Alejandro Garnacho all netted before halftime to effectively seal United's second successive victory after Saturday's Premier League win at Southampton.

Rashford and Garnacho each scored again after the interval and Christian Eriksen's double wrapped up United's biggest win since boss Erik ten Hag arrived from Ajax in 2022.

"It is the first time this team is playing together. Once we found our patterns we scored some great goals," Ten Hag said.

"We played with a lot of speed and were ruthless. The key was the right attitude and to be 100 percent concentrated."

"Last season was difficult for everyone, but we ended with the FA Cup. We hit our target and that is what we aim for this season, we want to progress."

Despite promising to take the League Cup "very seriously", Ten Hag made eight changes, with Manuel Ugarte handed his first start after the midfielder's arrival from Paris Saint-Germain.

Ten Hag's raft of switches were no hindrance for United, as it made a flying start to its bid to win the tournament for the second time in three seasons.

The Dutchman had described Rashford as being like a bottle of tomato ketchup after he scored his

first goal of the season at Southampton last weekend.

Having rarely scored during a difficult campaign last season, Ten Hag claimed Rashford would enjoy a spurt of success after breaking his duck.

His prediction looked spot on in the 16th minute, as Garnacho's raking pass picked out Rashford and he cut inside Marc Roberts before firing high past Barnsley keeper Gabriel Slonina into the top corner.

It was the first time the 26-year-old had scored in successive games since March.

Antony was making his first start this season, and the out-of-favor Brazilian international converted a 35th-minute penalty after being

fouled by Slonina as he ran through on goal.

Garnacho stabbed in United's third goal from close range in first-half stoppage time.

Garnacho netted again in the 49th minute, sprinting onto Eriksen's pass and slotting home.

Rashford bagged his brace in the 58th minute, taking Garnacho's pass and finishing with aplomb.

With Barnsley utterly outclassed, Eriksen steered in two clinical finishes in the 81st and 85th minutes.

## Shootout drama

At Deepdale, second-division Preston North End secured the biggest shock of the night by beating Fulham

16-15 in an epic penalty shootout.

The game ended 1-1 at full time with Ryan Ledson putting Preston ahead in the 35th and Reiss Nelson equalizing for Fulham in the 61st.

What followed was the longest shootout in League Cup history with Preston eventually triumphing after 34 spot kicks.

After 32 penalties were successfully converted, Fulham's Timothy Castagne missed the target, while Ledson made no mistake to fire Preston into the fourth round.

The previous League Cup shoot-out record was set in 2016 when Derby beat Carlisle 14-13.

Meanwhile, Everton's wretched start to the season showed no signs of abating, as Southampton won 6-5 on penalties following a 1-1 draw at Goodison Park.

AGENCIES